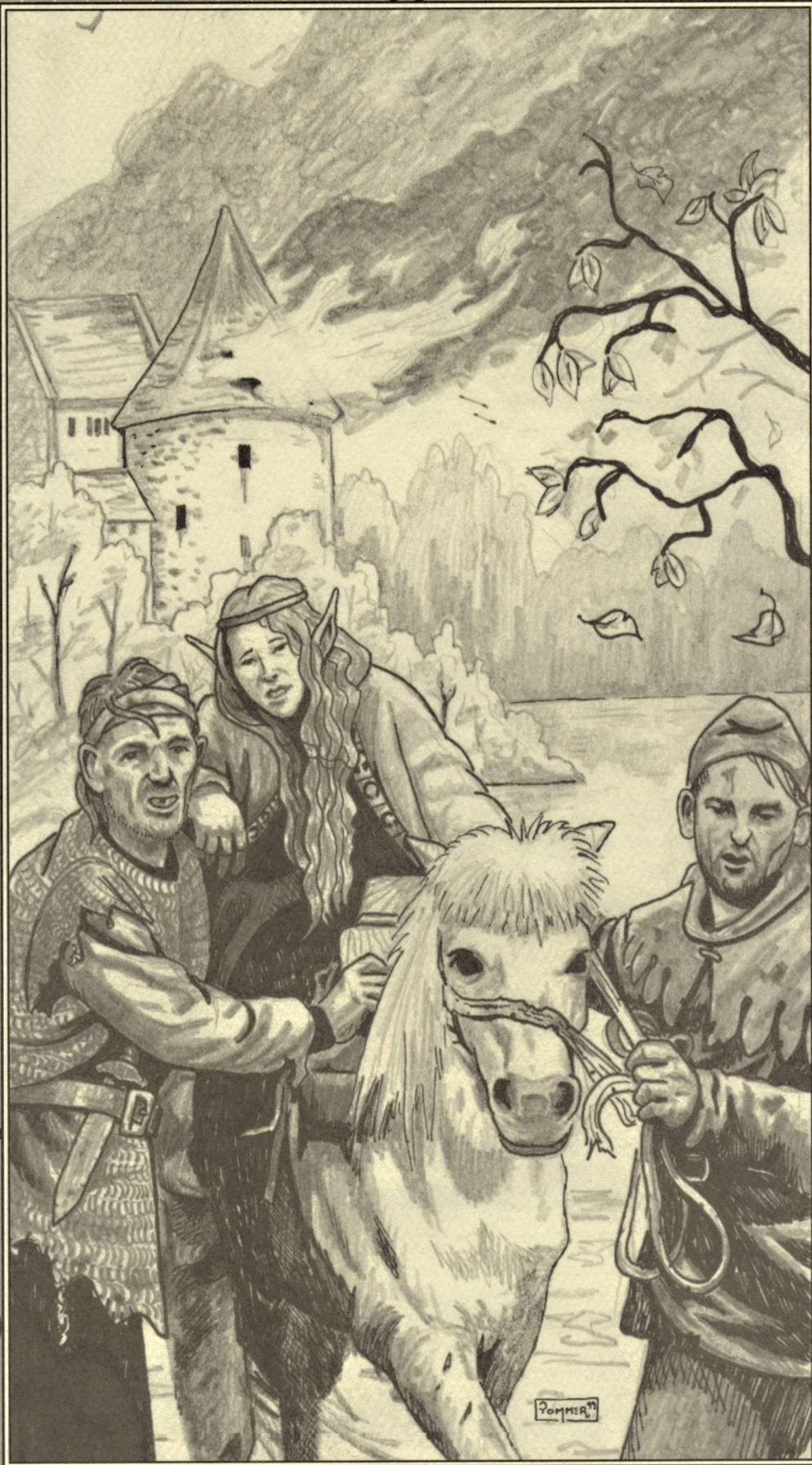


# Mythic Perspectives

NO. 9

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# Collationes Auctorum



Issue NO.9, Volume III

Autumn, 1999

## Features

|                                             |    |
|---------------------------------------------|----|
| Loci Europæ Fabulosæ<br>Ellan Vannin .....  | 5  |
| by Timothy Ferguson                         |    |
| Draugadróttin, The Norse Necromancer .....  | 15 |
| by Mark Shirley                             |    |
| De Singulis Conventuum<br>Hnchak .....      | 21 |
| by John J. Kasab                            |    |
| historia gratia historiæ<br>Calenture ..... | 33 |
| by Adam Bank                                |    |

## Et cetera

|                                                   |    |
|---------------------------------------------------|----|
| Epistolæ Receptæ .....                            | 1  |
| Atlas Games Autumn Update .....                   | 3  |
| More on Exceptional Abilities: Second Sight ..... | 36 |
| A Bibliothecis Hermeticis .....                   | 37 |
| Famæ Fabulæque .....                              | 38 |
| Council Passerum .....                            | 39 |
| Tales of the Order .....                          | 41 |
| Epilogue .....                                    | 45 |
| Contest Information .....                         | 46 |
| Ars Market .....                                  | 47 |

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## Gratiæ

**Publisher:** Gnawing Ideas

**Layout-Design:** Danelon Kimbrough

**Copy Editor:** Rich Evans

**Contributors:** Adam Bank, Timothy Ferguson, John Kasab, Mark Shirley, Jeff Tidball

**Cover and Page Border:** Eric Pommer

**Cartography and Jacket Design:** Eric Hotz

**Interior Illustrations:** Dan Fleener, Eric Hotz, John Kasab

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## Contacting MP

### US Post...

Gnawing Ideas  
attn: Mythic Perspectives  
PO Box 276677  
Sacramento, CA 95827-6677  
USA

### Publisher's Email...

ideas@gnawing.com

### Mythic Perspectives web site is...

[http://www.gnawing.com/  
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## Epistolæ Receptæ

If you would like your praise or criticism to appear in the epistolæ receptæ send a letter via paper or electronic media to the publisher. If your thoughts are informative enough, caustic enough, funny enough or just jump out and demand to be printed, they will appear here.

I very much enjoyed David Chart's article "Flaws" in the Spring 1999 issue (MP7). I think it goes a long way toward helping Storyguides add needed flexibility to the Virtues and Flaws as they are written.

There is one important factor that Mr. Chart seems not to have emphasized sufficiently: "Frequency [rating of a Flaw] refers to the frequency with which the Flaw comes into *play*." Certain activities, such as fighting and spellcasting, are much more common during game sessions than they are in the character's life overall. A Flaw that affects these activities should more common because it dramatically affects a character's performance during the story. Likewise, a Flaw that affects a grog or companion's daily occupation, but rarely arises during stories, should be considered rare.

The Frequency guidelines could be read to describe what percentage of scenes in which the Flaw arises. Then a Rare flaw would occur in less than 10% of the scenes in the Saga; an Uncommon one, in about 25% (or about one scene per game session, in my Saga), and so on.

I disagree with Mr. Chart's definitions of "Universality." He writes that "a narrow category would be all rolls involving sight, or all rolls involving hearing." I concede the second example, but I think sight affects several of what I would call "narrow categories:" reading, observing hidden things, and fighting. The real criterion should not be the breadth of the category affected—the choice of abstract categories seems quite arbitrary—but the significance of that category.

Fighting could be considered a "narrow category," but in an action-oriented Saga, fighting ability could decide the outcome of a story and it could mean life or death to the individual character.

These criticisms aside, the article was a great help to my Saga. First, it stimulated me and my Troupe to think about the value of Flaws in a more systematic way. Second, it is a great help in quantifying some previously vague "Variable" flaws, such as Cursed. I look forward to reading more of Mr. Chart's insightful rules commentaries in future issues.

**Andrew Gronosky**

I received MP 8 today. I continue being impressed by all the talented writers you manage to recruit to the magazine.

**Johan Söderberg**

First of all, congratulations on winning the Origins Award! It was definitely well deserved. Here's to a continuing improvement in Mythic Perspectives.

I think MP8 is probably the best issue yet. We get fun articles, and open declarations of heresy from the Line Developer at Atlas and the editor of the fanzine. Jeff's article was particularly interesting, although I suspect that he couldn't make those changes, even if he did run the show. They are sufficiently fundamental that the result would be a different game, inspired by Ars Magica.

The Queen of Fire was an excellent setting-scenario. The ideas about searching for a familiar and dealing with the fay were good, and easily applicable in other contexts.

The article on leprosy told me nothing I didn't already know, but then I wasn't the target audience, and it all seemed to be correct and useful.

Rich Evans' article on the Cult of Hermes was great. This is just the sort of fusion between history, myth, and creativity that does the game good.

Anakin's Grimoire... Do you want to be sued to hell and back? (You can probably shelter under the 'parody' clause, but be careful.)

Mark Shirley's article on Exceptional Abilities was thought provoking and useful. Blessing, in particular, sparked ideas.

Erika's Story wasn't by me. Bad boy, Damelon.

Tales of the Order continues to be good. I'm not entirely sure how Hélène is supposed to have acquired the Gift, but I look forward to finding out.

**David Chart**

I am a new fan of Ars Magica and your magazine. Both were introduced to me through a friend. Before ArM4 the only role-playing game I had ever played was AD&D and some Palladium games. Since being introduced to Ars Magica all other games are just not worth my time.

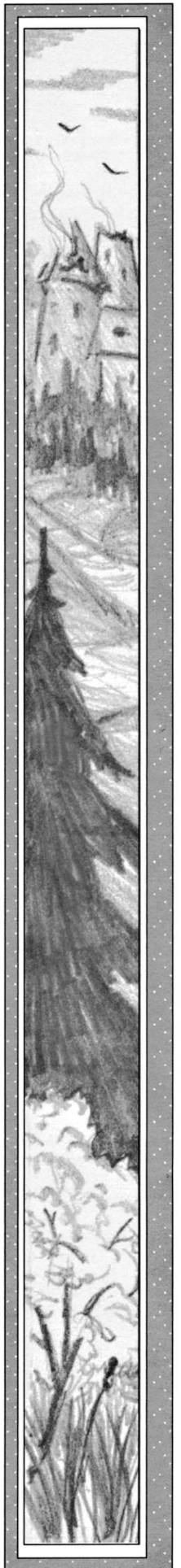
Being a newcomer to ArM4 I find your fanzine very educating. In a game like Ars Magica that inspires players to use more imagination and improvisation than rule memorization it is good to have other view points. I have enjoyed Council Passerum and will make use of it.

**Kyle Schirmer**

...Thank you for mentioning the wedding!

"The Queen of Fire" was excellent. I always prefer adventures which encourage thought over combat. The idea of having the characters play "Questions" particularly appealed to me. Nice artwork, too.

"The Gift and Society" was interesting, and thoughtful, but didn't leap out and say "Use me" the way that "Thoughts on Spell Guidelines" did. That may be partly because I tend to use Social Ability rolls rarely, making them secondary to role-playing, but it also seemed like a bit too much book-keeping. It was a good reminder of the social handicaps of being a magus, though.







"Leprosy in the Middle Ages" was good, sold background material, as was "The Modern Cult of Hermes Reborn." The latter also nicely tied together the various traditions which are involved in the Order's history. I agree with Rich Evans' views on the role of history in the game - it is a basis, not the law.

"Exceptional Abilities" was excellent, and cleared up a lot of vagueness in the rules, whilst avoiding becoming a pure mechanics article.

I like the new layout of "Council Passerum." I think it is a much better structure for answering the questions without losing any of the light-hearted tone.

I like the idea of expanding MP to cover more fantastic aspects. I have used Ars Magica rules in other settings before, and I think it would be good to see what others have done with the game when they've come away from the Mythic Europe setting.

A general note - I loved the artwork in this issue (the "Magic Theory for Dummies" ad cracked me up totally), but I think it's a shame there wasn't more of it.

**Niall Christie**

OK, first the complaints:

You've misattributed one of my pieces, "Erika's Story", to David Chart.

Next, In "Queen of Fire" the handout of rumours, in the original, was formatted so the Eglantine rumours could be handed out separately from the covenant rumours. The two have separate die rolls and I thought the text made that idea clear. *<Ed. note: It did. I combined them for some evil purpose that has yet to present itself>* As it is, the table doesn't quite make sense.

Positive feedback:

I liked the shorter and more varied articles...

I loved the art (for my article). It's not really how I imagined the characters, it's better. I don't really have the grasp I should on the little bits of verisimilitude for characters' clothes and so on. The picture of

Eglantine declining an eagle, is really nice, since I can show it to my players as a very subtle clue. Illustration as functional game aid.

I need more time to digest Rich Evans' article. It needs a fair bit of crunchy chewing for me to get everything out of it, but it tastes good so far.

I think that you are drawing too starkly the division between realism and fantasy. There's a middle ground I love, which uses epic tales that start from the realistic and spin out from there. If your new approach gives me more material like that, then I'm all for.

As always, love the rat, want the shirt.

**Timothy Ferguson**



I took MP8 away with me to read on the train, and I must confess that at first glance I didn't notice the omissions in the tables of my article on Exceptional Talents—I was just impressed by the other articles in the magazine—at least three of which I intend to use...

When I went back to read my own article carefully I noticed the mistakes, and I was composing an e-mail to you when your penitent apology came through.

Don't beat yourself up about it —mistakes happen (though they seem to happen more frequently when I'm concerned). First you spell my name wrong (MP6), then you bugged my tables...what's next? (triple strength protection smiles - I AM joking!)

The missing text is minor though irritating if people want to use the rules—and nothing that can't be fixed with errata. Seriously, I can't say that I was devastated when I realised the mistake, and I think that the overall quality of *Mythic Perspectives* is of such high standard for me not to worry about 'silly' things.

However, I suggest you publish an errata in MP9, or you can expect my declaration of Wizard's War at the next new moon...

**Mark Shirley**

*Egads, I really cocked up the last issue. I should have known that my 'feeling' of tranquility was a sign of impending doom. OK, I am really (really) sorry to all those authors (there are so many of you) that were punished by my lack of attention to detail. I would like to think I have learned my lesson, but I have probably attributed someone's work in this issue to Gengis Khan or some other nonsense.*

*OK, so from the front...*

## Errata

- The 'What do I know about' handout (MP8 p.8) was rendered next to worthless by my not dividing the die results into two columns to reflect information a character would possess about the Covenant of Everburning Flames and what they would know about Eglantine. Looking at the chart with this confession in mind makes it a bit more usable as material, but not as a handout.

- The Protection table (MP8 p.33) has two errors. The first is in the 'Christian rite' column, the first result 9+ should simply read 'The prayer of St. Michael'. The second error is in the 'Desired Result' column: the second 9+ result should read 'Cause someone to be unmolested by the low fae'.

- The 12+ result of Sense Holiness and Unholiness table (MP8 p.34) should read 'Detect the relative strength of an Aura (Strong, Moderate, or Weak)'.

- The 12+ result in the first Premonitions Virtue table (MP8 p.35, Bottom of first column) should read 'Moderate danger (priest wants to frame you for murder)'.

- Erika's Story (MP8 p.37) was written by Timothy Ferguson (TF), not David Chart (DC).

*Finally, Mythic Perspectives won the Origins Award for Best Amateur Game Magazine. Thank you to all who cast ballots, and thank you to all the contributors who made winning the award possible.* ■





## Autumn 1999 Update

by Jeff Tidball

Atlas Games Ars Magica Products  
with Origins Awards: 0

Gnawing Ideas Ars Magica Products  
with Origins Awards: 1

Atlas Games didn't win any Origins Awards this year. A fine Ars Magica product, *Return of the Stormrider*, was nominated for best scenario, but it didn't win. Two games I designed, *Spammers* and *Cults Across America*, were nominated for best board game, but neither of them won. *Mythic Perspectives*, on the other hand, took home the award for Best Amateur Magazine.

I've just now deleted the rest of a column that extolled the tremendous virtues of *Mythic Perspectives*: fabulous production values, quality authors, excellent articles, and a devoted publisher. It sounded too much like the script for an infomercial, though, so as I mentioned, I've deleted it. Besides, you're already convinced that *Mythic Perspectives* is a fine magazine because you buy it.

So rather than take up a lot of your time (and a lot of space in this magazine) belaboring the obvious, I'll simply wish *Damelon* and all of the contributors to *Mythic Perspectives* the hearty congratulations of everyone here at Atlas Games.

Keep up the good work.



## Upcoming Releases

### **Heirs to Merlin: The Stonehenge Tribunal** For Ars Magica Fourth Edition

"Britain, the best of islands, is located in the Western Ocean, between France and Ireland. It is eight hundred miles long and two hundred wide, and provides plenty of everything that human beings need."

— from the introduction to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*

**Heirs to Merlin: The Stonehenge Tribunal** details Mythic Europe's England and Wales. This essential work surveys a fascinating land ripe for adventure, from tales of King Arthur to the death of Thomas Becket, from the coming of the Order of Hermes to the ascendance of Blackthorn covenant, and from the druids' stone circles to tales of the English saints.

Ars Magica storyguides will come away from **Heirs to Merlin** with the background knowledge and inspiration necessary to run truly epic campaigns set in the Stonehenge Tribunal. And due to the multitude of saga options presented, even players of Stonehenge sagas can read **Heirs to Merlin** — every single page — without worry that an adventure's secrets will be spoiled. An entire troupe's access to this book will ensure a roleplaying experience of astounding depth.

**Product Number:** AG0262

**ISBN:** 1-887801-79-0

**Length:** 176 pages

**Suggested Retail Price:** \$22.95 US

**Author:** David Chart

**Editor:** John Kasab

**Cover Artist:** Douglas Shuler

**Shipping in November, 1999**



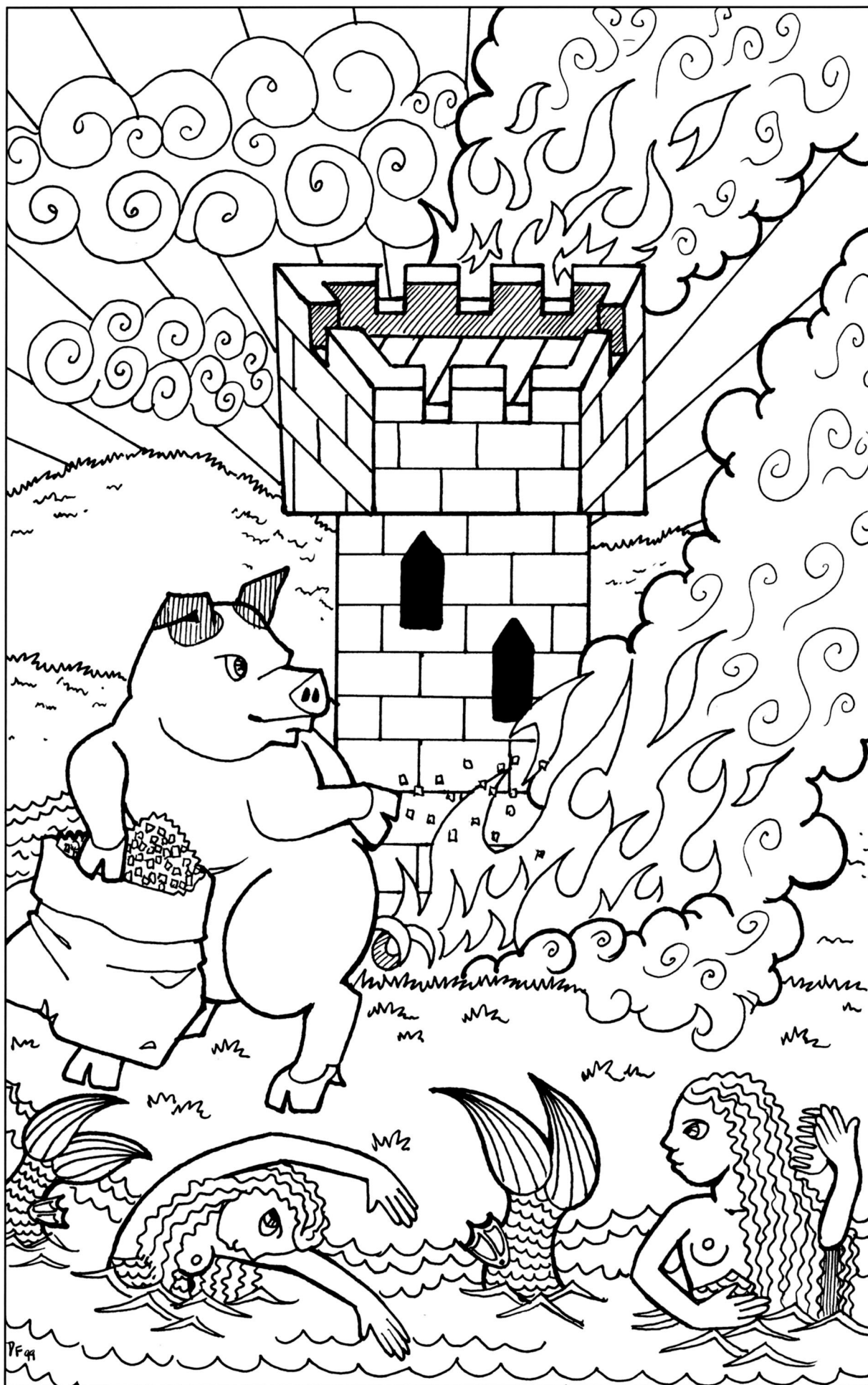
Do you have a question or comment that you'd like me to address in this column? Send a letter to Jeff Tidball, Atlas Games, PO Box 131233, Roseville, MN, 55113, USA. Or, e-mail AGJeff@aol.com, and make sure to mention that you'd like to see your questions answered here. I've never gotten a letter referencing this column, and I'm starting to feel unloved. ■

## Publisher's Rant

Each issue Jeff Tidball takes the time to produce an ad and write an update for *Mythic Perspectives*. Someone (not me) might argue that it is in Atlas' best interest to provide these things and so it's not something that should really require any input. That would be short sighted. Jeff always gets his material to me when he says he will (notice that Ars Magica products in general enjoy the benefit of this work ethic) and this is one of the reasons I have been able to continually meet deadlines. The horror stories about missed deadlines in this industry are legion. I would like to think this is something that is appreciated by you the readers, but yet, here is Jeff pleading for some attention. GIVE IT TO HIM! Maybe it hasn't occurred to anyone, but he takes time out of his busy (busy) schedule to provide his opinions and product updates which are not only useful but generally enhance the magazine's content. The problem with a column like this is after a while, what do you write about? As I would hate to see it become nothing more than a flavorless mini-product update, pass along any suggestions for topics or questions to him and help keep it interesting. ■









## Loci Europae Fabulosae:

## Ellan Vannin

by Timothy Ferguson

*Innumerable years ago the wizard Mannanin-Mac-Lir called an island from the frigid depths of the Irish Sea. On Barrule, its topmost peak, he conjured a castle, wherein his retinue feasted, and to which the islanders brought tributes of rushes. When ships approached Man would draw a sea mist about the island. If the seamen held their course and came within sight of his demesnes, Man would armour a follower and place him upon the mountain. By magic he would make him seem a hundred men. Man's rule persisted for a very long time, until a miracle unseated him.*

*Saint Patrick and his followers were blown to sea by an unseasonal storm. When they struck the tiny island, still called Saint Patrick's, they went ashore and taught the people how to spin wool and till land for crops. The saint also banished all of the snakes and toads from the island. The people, who now lived better than ever before, no longer wanted to give rushes to Man, so he transformed himself into three flaming, armoured legs and flung himself down the hill at Saint Patrick, declaring the island's motto *Whichever way you throw me, I shall stand*. Saint Patrick wasn't all that impressed and sang a hymn that formed a shield between himself and Man. The saint chased the wizard-god up the mountain to his castle, which melted away.*

*Many say that Man now rules an island sunk fifteen miles south-west of the Calf, and that it rises to the surface only when the Old May Day is a Sunday, but others swear that Man still hides on his mountain, and when the mists tumble down, they say he is drawing his cloak.*



he people of Man are a mix of Celt and Viking. Since 1098 the islands off the coast of Scotland have belonged, in theory, to the Norse. The kings of the

Scots lacked the sea-power to counter the raiding, then invasions, by the men of the north, but the Norwegian kings usually wanted to stay close to their source of manpower. This made the Irish Sea a frontier territory, where the old Scots title *Lord of the Isles*, the Norwegian subkingdom of Man and the rulership of Dublin became mangled together.

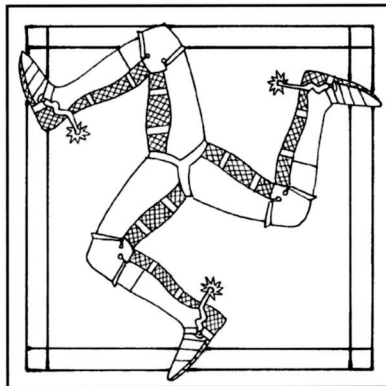
In 1220 the Kingdom of Man controls the Hebrides and is nominally part of the Norwegian empire, but a King of Man, Reginald, did homage to the king of England in 1204 in exchange for land in Lancashire and money. If Mythic European history proceeds as ours did, in 1228 the deposed Reginald will bring some English friends to Man and raid the south almost back to wilderness. In 1263 Alexander III will invade the Isles, the Norse will make a counter-thrust and be ambiguously beaten at the battle of Largs. Magnus, King of Man, will be allowed to keep his territories only after swearing fealty to Alexander. Three years later, the Kingdom of Man, with its Hebridean territories, will be signed back to the Scots in the Treaty of Perth

after Mangus dies. The English and Scots will contest Man, with the English eventually securing control in 1333.

## Peel

The little isle where Saint Patrick landed remains an important site for the Manx. Saint Patrick's Isle is small and ruggedly-sided, which makes it easily defensible. There was probably a monastic community dating from Patrick's mission (circa 5th) and their church probably attracted the vikings, who built a fort on the island (circa 11th). The church has been rebuilt since then and a cathedral, Saint German's, was built (begins 1154) to act as the seat of the Bishop of Sodor and Man, who is subordinate to the Archbishop of Trondheim. *Sodor* is the Norse term for the southern Hebrides, called the Sudreys.

The English name of the castle and the local town, Peel, is a corruption of the Manx *pile* which refers to a wooden stockade about this fort. Although the modern wall, and the stockade before it, were both later than the Ars Magica starting date, it doesn't stretch the imagination much to suggest an earlier stockade. Perhaps it was constructed by Magnus Barelegs when he seized the island and terrified the men







of Galway into supplying him the timber to fortify its strong points. A dumped stone rampart protected part of the island before the first stockade was erected. For purists, the Manx name for the town is *Purt ny Hinshey* (Port of the Island). It's about three miles from the castle, and serves as a major base for fishing and hosting or smuggling (depending on how late your campaign is set).

It's not clear where Man's capital is in 1220, but Peel's the best bet. The last Norse king of Man, named Magnus, lived in Castle Rushen, but his father, Olaf II, and grandfather, Godred II, both died in Peel, in 1237 and 1187 respectively. Godred II was briefly King of Dublin, which he ruled from Man, for which Peel seems the most convenient port. Why the capital moves is unclear, and a rationale can be worked into a Manx campaign by the storyguide.

Peel has Man's most famous ghost, the *Moddey Dhoo*, a creature similar to a barguest. Its stories date from after the thirteenth century, but if you'd like to use it, imagine a great black dog that terrifies to death anyone left alone, especially in the armoury of the castle.

## Hill of Saint John's Chapel (Cronk Keeill Eoin) and the Tynwald

The Tynwald, literally *thing field* or *meeting place*, is a parliament, that assembles on a hill outside the village of Saint John's. By tradition the Tynwald meets on midsummer's day, a practical choice, since it is held in the open air and probably involved sacrifices to Norse gods, along similar lines to the Icelandic *Althing*. All free men are members of the Tynwald, but the powerful nobles of the island form a separate group who counsel the king during his deliberations. By tradition this council has 24 members and is called the House of Keys. When a member of the Keys dies, the others appoint his successor. The English name of this council is probably a corruption of the Manx *yn kiare-as-feed* which means *the four and twenty*, but might also come from the Norse *kvid* or *kjosa* meaning *jury* or *chosen*.

Another special role at the Tynwald belonged to the two deemsters. Since the law of Man was unwritten, these heralds carried it in their hearts, so it was called Breast Law. It was the duty of a deemster to recite the current law, to announce new laws under consideration and

to proclaim the judgement on offenders bought to the Tynwald. The Norse word for judgement is *doom*, and that's the source of the title. When a dispute as to the meaning of the law arose the deemster would consult with the Keys, whose interpretation would be binding.

It's unclear when a thing of all Manxmen first met. It's likely that the six administrative districts of the island each had their own gathering during the earliest centuries of Viking settlement. Later there were two lawmen, an earlier form of deemster, on the island, one for the North and the other for the South, and it's likely each had their own assembly. The term *Tynwald* first appears in the historical record as the site of a battle in which King Reginald was killed in 1228. Storyguides can use whichever of these administrative models best suits their saga.

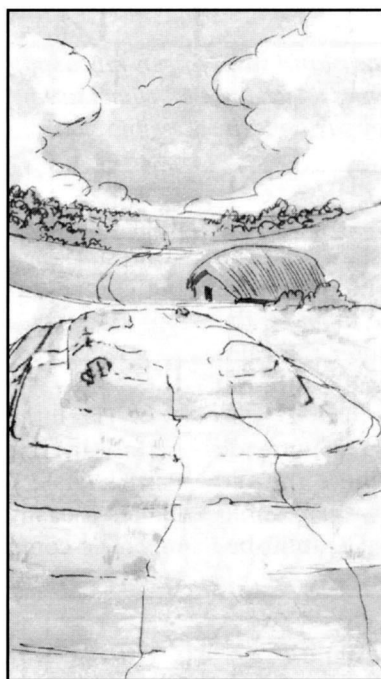
The tiered law hill on which the Tynwald meets was, by tradition, constructed with earth from the seventeen parishes of Man. It's probably a Bronze Age burial mound, although the Manx might have added ceremonial earth to it. It is 76 feet long and rises in four tiers, each of about three feet. Nearby is a chapel dedicated to Saint John, which probably replaced an earlier temple dedicated to Thor that was used as both a courthouse, before the procession to the hill, and a feasting hall, afterward. On Tynwald Day the processional road, hill platform and church aisle are strewn with rushes. Unlike other Viking assembly sites, there's no sign of a sacrificial stone here, but tradition indicates wrongdoers were executed by being

rolled down the slope overlooking the Tynwald in a barrel spiked with iron nails. Witches were put to ordeal by water nearby. Such judicial deaths were sacrificial before the coming of Patrick.

Lighting hilltop fires on midsummer's day, after the Tynwald, was an act of sun worship. Even when Balder and Lugh had been displaced by Saint John beacon-burnings continued.

## Douglas

The modern capital of Man was an unimportant port in earlier times. It is the only one on the island not dependent on the tide, so its fortunes rise and fall with the smuggling industry. Many folktales begin with a person heading





to the market in Douglas (*Doolish*) and meeting a faerie on the road, but these are easily moved.

## Castletown (Balla-Chastal) and Castle Rushen

A precise date for the first Norse fort on this site is incalculable. A Norman motte was built here, possibly as late as 1225. Rushen Castle's existence is first documented in regard to the death of King Magnus (1266). Given that the south was ransacked in 1228 it's unlikely that the castle was in place at that time.

Rushen Abbey was a powerful Cistercian establishment active during the Ars Magica period. Founded with land grants from several noblemen in 1134 it grew so rapidly that in 1194 the monks moved to Douglas for 5 years while the abbey was enlarged. Early notes suggest the monks here refused to wear shoes or furs and refrained from meat unless travelling. Their abbots were appointed by the Cistercian house at Furness, which may have also appointed the Bishops of Sodor and Man, many of whom served there.

## Ramsey

A town in the north of the island, it's almost traditional to land here if you are going to invade Man. Godred Crovan, first Norse king of Man, mythically known as King Orry, landed his forces here before taking the island. Robert the Bruce may follow his example next century.



## The Calf

A small island lies off the southern end of the Isle of Man, separated by a narrow channel. It's called the Calf, from a Norse word *meaning little island by a bigger island*. It makes an excellent covenant site. It appears only occasionally in the historical record, but, like much of the island, is probably seeded with little Celtic monastic cells.

## Barrule

Barrule isn't a mountain, and its peak isn't the tallest point on Man, but folklore insists. In the real world it has a Bronze Age fortress on its southern face. In Mythic Europe, it's probably the source of Man's strange aura.

## The Aura

The Manx don't divide supernatural experiences into four categories, as Hermetic magi do. For them mystical things exist, and if one is troubling you, then you find an even bigger mystical thing to counter it. God, in Manx folklore, is the ultimate counteractant. This explains why, in Manx stories, creatures from all of the realms seem to be attracted to each other. It also explains why combined charms, drawing from several realms, work synergistically instead of cancelling themselves.

The best demonstration of this is the use of the cuirn cross. This is a Christian holy symbol carved out of cuirn (mountain ash, also called rowan) wood. It repels faeries for several reasons. Cuirn repels witches in Celtic belief, is sacred to Thor in Norse belief and the cross shape repels evil in Christian belief. Similar combined charms include avoiding faeries by sewing a herb called verbane into the hems of clothes and crossing oneself, or carving a carved charm in the shape of the throat bone of the bollan fish. On Man, beneficial effects work together regardless of source. The only realm which doesn't seem to work in close association with the others is the Infernal, which is all but absent from Manx folktales.

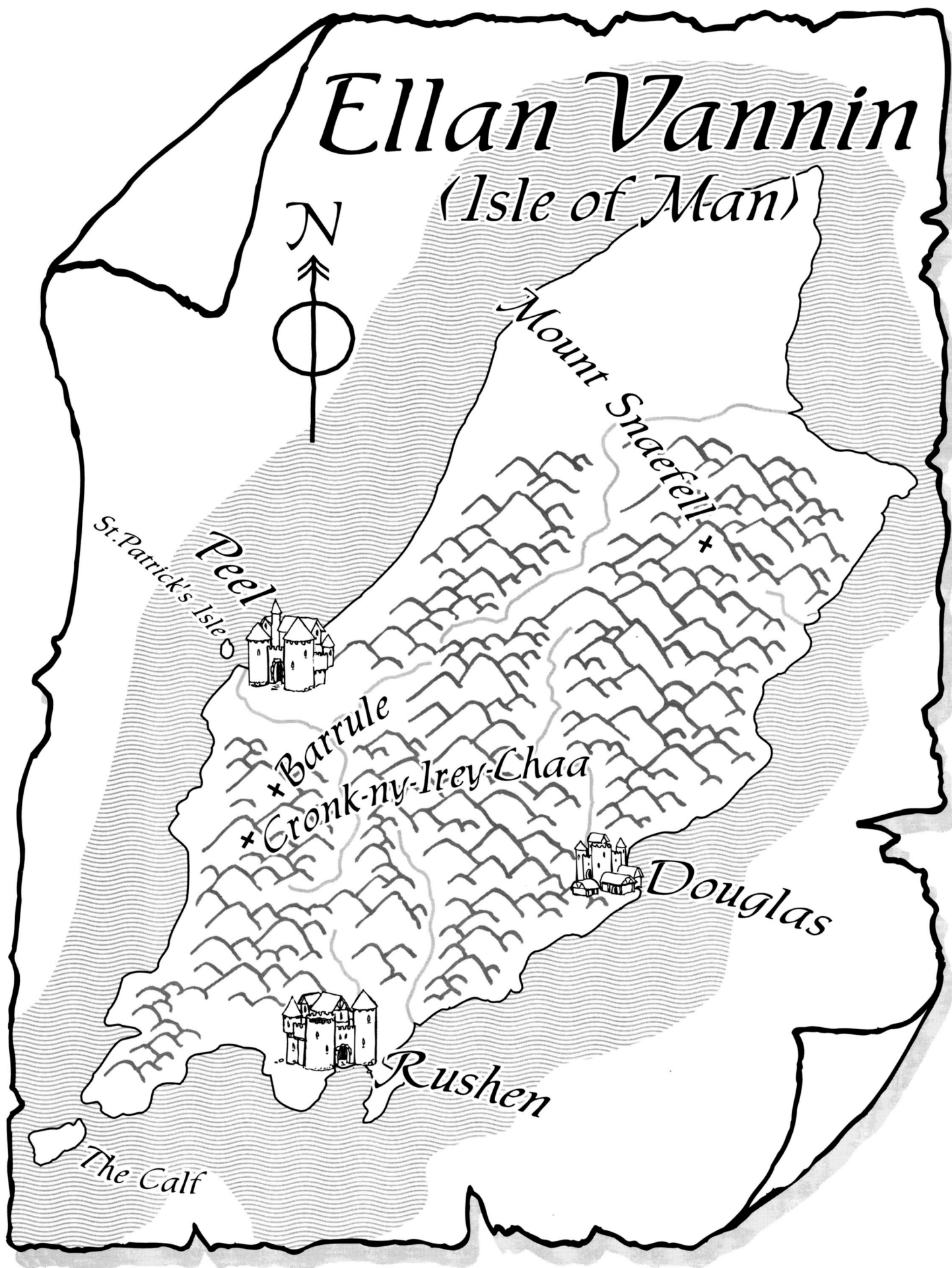
Man has a unique aura, called *Favourable* that aids any supernatural activity linked to a Realm other than the infernal. To determine the aura's strength in a place, work out what it would be elsewhere in Europe then change its flavour to Favourable. For example, a hermit's cell might usually have a Divine Aura of 2. On

Man, this would be a Favourable aura of 2, which explains why bugganes, a faerie creature described later, like to haunt ruined chapels. The Favourable aura penalises Infernal powers by its magnitude.

Within the Favourable Aura, magic works slightly differently than is usual. Folk charms are devastatingly effective, which has inhibited Hermitic settlement of the island. For example:

- Salt is a little like holy water. Created objects, while within the aura, retain some touch of magic, and if salt is sprinkled upon them they vanish explosively. A tiny twist of salt is enough to destroy a castle built by magic. A dish of salt's also placed on the chest of corpses. Salt's sprinkled over milk before its sold, and over things lent to others.







- A tramman (elder) tree planted before the door casts a protective charm about a house, like a 15th level *Aegis of the Hearth*. A creature or charm carried or invited in is immune to this effect. Since many Manx people leave cream for the faeries inside their houses, this charm doesn't prevent the li'l boys from entering.

- A cuirn cross nailed to a doorpane has a similar effect to the tramman tree, but it doesn't care who you've invited in. Carried, the cross frightens faeries who wish to cause harm.

- If you whistle at sea, a tempest will rise. Something similar happens if you drive a knife into your mast. Doing both at once creates incredibly severe storms.

- Some Manx families have a spell known to only a few members at a time, which passes through inheritance. Each *charm* has a single effect and if any but the blood line know the words their power fades. Some charms need to be passed down from man to woman, then woman to man. Most charms are Christian prayers which always work. An example is the charm to stem blood flow described in Manx Remembrances. As a guideline, each charm is a virtue valued at (equivalent Hermetic spell's level/5). The Manx also use the term charm for amulets made with folk magic.

- The Curse virtue is extremely common on Man

- Iron protects people from the evil eye and from faeries. This is why some Manx women, when assailed by the odd, place their fire tongs across the baby's crib.

## Just over the Hill

Manx folklore coalesced from several centres, so it contains overlaps. Since its easiest to tell stories about prominent, but somewhat distant, geographical features, several communities developed traditions about certain sites. Later, their stories were blended together, but its obvious that on Man, there simply isn't enough space for all of the odd people who are meant to be living just over the next hill.

For example, the peak called Barrule is meant to be the abode of Mannanin Mac Lir, Adah the witch, a buggane and a phynnoddere. Presuming they haven't invented the apartment building, the only way to squeeze all these characters in is to assume they have some sort of informal agreement to cohabit, or to make liberal use of regiones. This effect's most apparent on Barrule, but the rest of the island's also crowded because some of the myths originally told in Douglas about down *Laxey way* aren't the same ones they told down *Laxey way*.

Storyguides are encouraged to use this to advantage. The players in the Manx campaign that was the source for this article have accepted that regiones pour down from the mountain like bubbles over a cone of champagne glasses, bursting or jostling where the Favourable Aura is strong. There's always something new on the mountain. There's always something not yet discovered in the forest. No matter how many times you survey the seafloor, next time, there'll be something new down there. This makes Man very difficult to colonise, because you can never be sure if the ground you've put your covenant on is mundane, or just a temporarily immobile regione that might go spinning off into the sea. It also means that the characters can't mine out all the stories of the little island without working out what causes the Favourable Aura and destroying it.

## The Faeries

The fae on Man are of many types, but the main four categories are the Bugganes, the Phynnodderees, the Li'l Boys and the Ben-Varrey. Manx faeries rarely appear in the big cities, because they dislike the bustle, but aren't frightened off by the Dominion, since it isn't strongly manifest on the island. A court of them persists, it's said, in modern-day Douglas, in a regione beneath the fairground.

## Bugganes

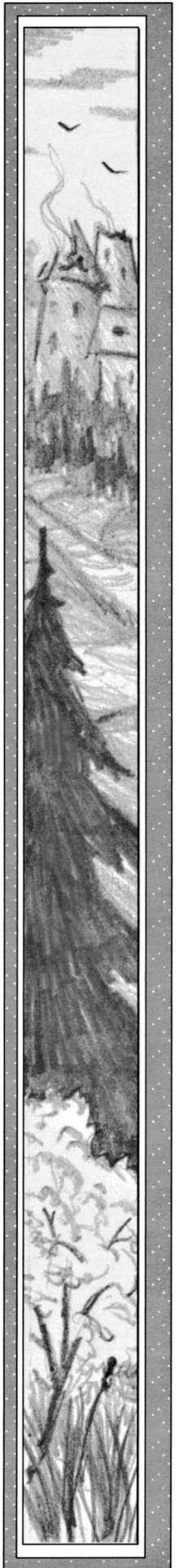
Troublemakers with many magical powers, bugganes like to haunt natural features and man-made structures which have fallen into disuse. They rip thatch off houses and haystacks, blow smoke down chimneys and push sheep off embankments. A buggane is known to live near St Trinian's, and to have ripped off its roof so often that people have given up trying to finish the church. Another lives on Barrule, and others crop up wherever storytellers need them. Their powers include

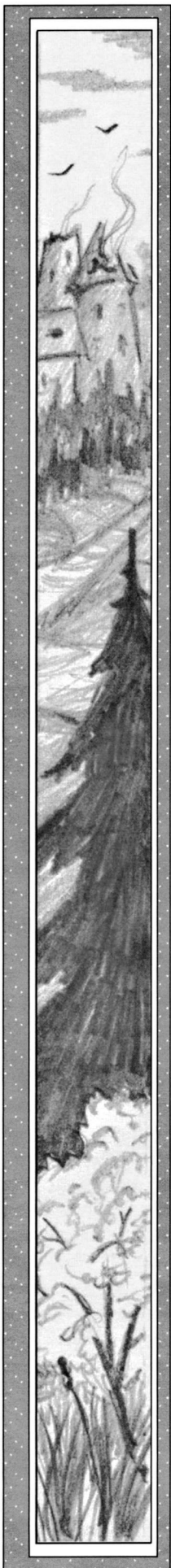
- Shifting to shapes such as a mouse, a flame-eyed calf, a thin man with his head under his arm and a monstrous figure with hair like grass and eyes like brandy balls. This last may be the natural form, although others suggest the buggane's true form is a moon-shadow.

- Changing size so that they are larger than a house.

- Whisking people away on the wind, and flying home themselves.

- Throwing their heads as explosive weapons (they reappear immediately)





## Phynnodderees (Fynoderees)

Resembling satyrs, these creatures look like huge, shaggily-pelted men with burning eyes, pointed ears and dog-like teeth. Phynnodderees dwell in forests, in which brave souls can seek them out. Using their little flutes that can summon animals to them, and they can cure any animal of its ailments. They are superhumanly strong and can twist iron with their bare hands. A tribe of them used to live on one side of a certain valley, in the island's north, and they spent their nights shouting taunts to the bugganes who lived on the other side. A woman who lived in the valley was driven to distraction by the noise and sang to the phynnodderees to calm them. She did this every night for weeks, but eventually scared them all away by singing the Old Hundred, which Manx faeries hate. No-one has seen them since.

One phynnodderee wasn't in the valley. He was working as a farmhand in another village, but left weeping when the housewife made him a suit of clothes. Phynnodderees can't wear clothes because of their shaggy hides. Perhaps he's the phynnodderee who twists gymnastically through the branches of a certain tramman tree, waiting to be called down by mortals. People who seek this Phynnodderee have to cross themselves three times after calling him down, or they can never find their way home. Eventually this phynnodderee went to live on Barrule. He and his wife fell out, and as she fled to Ireland he flung rocks at her, which is where some of the more interesting boulders on the island come from.

This phynnodderee has a second origin story. He's thought to be an elvish knight who went courting a mortal maid instead of attending the High Harvest Feast at the Fairy Hill. He was cursed with this horrid form by a faerie king as punishment.

## Li'l Boys

There are several courts of trooping faeries on the island, each linked to a natural feature, but the best known is under the Fairy Hill in Glen Rushen. They play tricks, but are kind to those who leave a little cream out for them each evening. In some Manx folktales the li'l boys

celebrate Christmas by visiting those who've done good by them and leaving pats of butter while the mortals sleep. They are attracted to magic, and sometimes kidnap those who use charms. One of their victims was taken to a court where he fell in love with his own great-grandmother.

The li'l boys sometimes reward the talented and good by trying to steal them away. Although this is a horrible experience for the mortal

who is forced to leave their loved ones behind, the faeries think that they should be honoured to be offered an eternal life without pain, suffering or hunger. To be stolen away forever a mortal generally needs to accept something from the faeries. Food is usual, but other gifts, like the tune that steals your heart away, can also trans-

form the recipient into a li'l one. The transformed retain memories of who they once were, so it's not uncommon for a mortal to be warned not to accept the item that'll make them change by a faerie who looks a little like someone they once knew. Most men changed into faeries are assumed to have run away to sea.

## Ben Varrey

Merfolk often appear in Manx stories, and most seem unaware that humans die if they try to live under the sea. A few can take human shape, and these sometimes visit land people. They use shells as currency, but if pressed will retrieve gold from sunken ships to pay for mortal goods. Fishermen from Man sometimes hear chapel bells toiling under the sea, and take this as evidence that the merfolk marry much as land people do. One mermaid is recorded as having an inordinate love of *land eggs*, or apples, so her human lover plants a tree that overlooks the stream in which she dwells.

The sight and song of the lovely ladies of the sea can be addictive, causing men to pine and drown themselves. There are a series of charms which can break this fascination, but a slighted merwoman can ensure that a fisherman's nets stay empty. Often a poem and a bribe, such as a comb, can convince a merwoman to seek a husband with a fishy tail. This usually breaks the charm over her landsman swain, but the few who remain fae-





struck become sailors and cross the deep oceans seeking their lost love.

## Other folks to slip into adventures

### Adah

Adah, also known as Ada is a witch who lives on Barrule. She gives advice and flies upon a broom.

### Bridgett the Queen of the L'il Fellas

There's a beautiful woman living on the isle who was born on a night the faeries danced. Her parents discovered that the li'l boys wanted to steal her, but they couldn't while an adult was watching. One day, when she was a girl her parents had to leave her unattended and the li'l boys stole her to be their queen. Seven years later her brother, who had some odd abilities went to bring her back. She still sometimes cocks her head listening to things others can't hear, or stares off into space, seeing what others can't see.

### Foawr

Foawr is the Manx term for a giant, but its also the proper name of a single giant who recurs in Manx myth. He lives on Cronk-Ny-Iree-Laa (The Hill of the Rising Sun) and isn't terribly bright.

### Glashtin

The Glashtin is a faerie that can take the shape of a man or horse. It drowns and eats maidens. In human form it has pointed teeth and ears.

### Liannian Sidhe

The Faerie Sweet-heart is so ethereally beautiful that men who see her face are compelled to follow her into Faerie. She tries to trick men into seeing her face by walking up behind them in the street and sighing plaintively, or tugging their sleeves. She'll haunt her victim's farm, standing at the windows as he awakes. Sprigs of vervane and the bone of the bollan fish are of limited protective value, since, once the man has seen her face, he wants to wander. Some of her victims return briefly after seven years, thinking only a day has passed. Most returnees drift off again, called by their faerie lover.



## The Little Wooden Pig

One Manx story tells of a little wooden pig which can fly in the blink of an eye from Man to Finland, where he was carved, and then back again. The story suggests that there are other carved pigs with identical talents. The pig probably has the ability to navigate faerie trods, but can only take others along if they are seated as passengers upon his back. He can change size to accommodate a rider, but many magi would refuse to be seen riding about on the back of a wooden pig, regardless of convenience.

## Mollyndroat

Rumplestiltskin lives on Man, but here his name is Mollyndroat. Back in mythical time there were only seven families on the island, all of whose names began with *Molly*. Since people assume that his name must be one of the seven, accepting the faerie's challenge doesn't seem nearly stupid as when continentals do. He shares Rumplestiltskin's weakness: he boasts of his own cleverness when he thinks he's alone, thereby giving away his name.

## Salmon people

One of the rivers holds salmon who can turn into people with silver hair. If caught with silver hooks they can't switch to human form until the barb is removed. The town of Laxey's name is derived from the Norse word for *salmon river*, so perhaps that's where they are found.

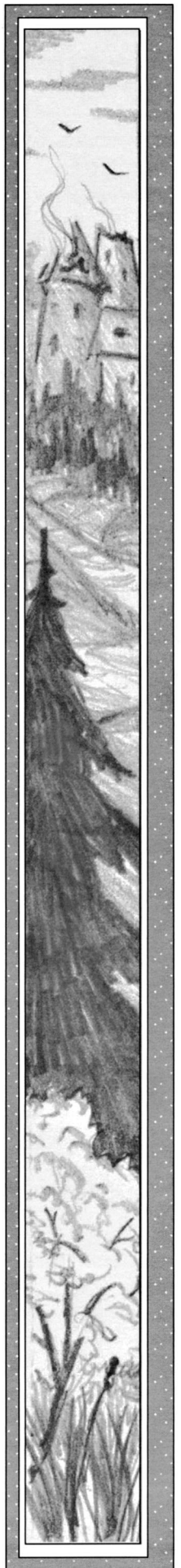
## Shiaght the Pig

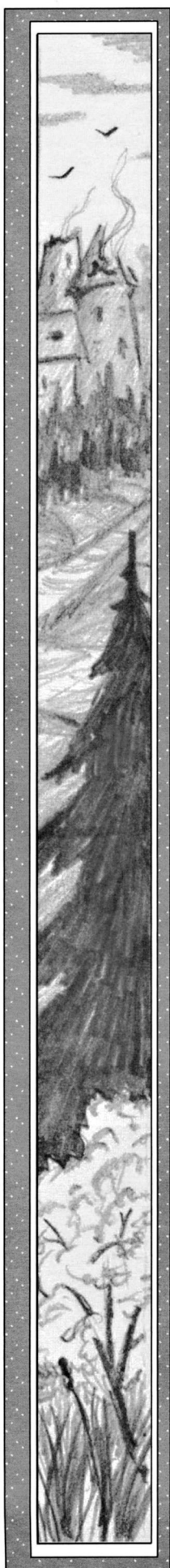
Shiaght, whose name means Seven, is one of the Seven Magical Pigs of the South. He's white with red ears and eyes, and speaks excellent Manx. His adventurous personality and ability to teleport allow him to crop up just about

anywhere, and his ability to change size, and tremendous luck, let him escape most of the situations he gets into. He's one of the heroes credited with destroying the magician's castle by shedding salt on it.

## Taroo-Ushtey

Wild, and wicked looking faerie bulls, forced to remain docile while you hold a switch of cuirn that you stroke them with.





## The Wizard

There's a wizard on Snaefell, who lives like Man, with a retinue in a castle, but its gets destroyed by someone sprinkling salt on it. The odd thing is that there are several myths attributing this destruction to different heroes. Could it be that the castle on Snaefell has been destroyed more than once? Is this Man, or some other magus? Is this where all of those Hermetic colonists got to? Since the castle's in a regione, are successive heroes just destroying pale reflections of Man's castle, with the wizard moving to a higher level each time his home gets blown to bits by some guy being clumsy with condiments? Why is it on the wrong mountain?

## The Wren-witch

A beautiful faerie maid used to lure men into the sea with her voice. A cunning knight tried to trap her, but she escaped by taking the form of a wren. During her escape she was cursed to reappear on the island each St. Stephen's Day in that form. As part of their Christmas festivities Manxmen hunt a wren with sticks, carry it about their communities in a bier then bury it with much pomp. The feathers of the wren are supposed to save their owners from shipwreck for the next year.

## Hermetic myths

The Isle of Man, called Mona by Caesar, rests at the intersection of the Stonehenge, Loch Leglean and Hibernia tribunals. Several expeditions have been sent to found covenants there, but each has failed mysteriously. Survivors claim that the animals of the island speak, and that the druids may still dwell there. They claim that the isle has a powerful Faerie and Magical aura. Whichever magi settle Man may choose which of the three tribunals they will join...

...or so people say.

Various supplements have given differing descriptions of the Mythic Isle of Man. You should use whichever best suits the themes and style of your saga, and shouldn't feel forced to select one which all Hermetic magi agree is true.

Magi living close to the Isle of Man may have more accurate or recent accounts of life there than Continental magi. Continentals may, however, give scant credit to the views of the magi who chose to live on the Order's frontier, preferring stories passed down by some ancient scribe from a Latin house.

Hermetic magi find the Isle of Man difficult to settle. Their key problems are that they don't recognise the Favourable aura as unusual, or the existence of the many regiones jostling about the island.

If you dislike the Favourable Aura, or regione cascade, find another solution to this puzzle. Accounts of druidic survival are alarming, but unproven. Certain

militant houses would be encouraged to settle Man by the suspicion that the druids were active there. Talking animals aren't unique to Man, and magi usually welcome their presence, since they provide familiars and vis. Perhaps Man or some other wizard, perhaps a druid, hides atop Barrule or Snaefell, sending disturbing images to those who enter his domain...

...or perhaps Hermetic colonists just blow themselves up trying to salt food while within their *Parmae Magica*.

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This site contains a clickable map of Man which divides the isle of Man into quarters.

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# Draugadróttin, The Norse Necromancer

by Mark Shirley

*Wake thee, Groa! Wake, mother good!  
At the doors of the dead I call to thee;  
Thy son, bethink thee thou badst to seek  
Thy help at the bill of death  
(v1, The Ballard of Svipdagr)*

**T**he Norse necromancer is perhaps the most feared of all the Northern wizards. The average Scandinavian had a healthy distrust in all magic, considering it to be unclean and unmanly. However, those that interfered with the sleep of the dead were particularly reviled by Northern society. A quote from the Havamal sums up this attitude: *Cattle die, men die, we all die. But one thing I know lives forever—the reputation of a dead man.* The sentiment is that once a man dies, his actions can no longer destroy a hard-won reputation. The action of a Necromancer is to raise a man from the dead, thus enabling his reputation to be sullied through acts committed on the sorcerer's behalf.

The Norse Necromancer is unlike a Jewish or European necromancer. Unlike these wizards, they do not summon ghosts to do their bidding. Instead, they are able to raise a man's corpse from their burial mound. The concept of life after death was very different for the pagan Northman. Their souls were believed to be composed of many parts, all of which fared to different places after one's life was used up. The Self (the closest thing to the Christian Soul) passed onto to either a life of glory in the Valhall if an honourable death in battle was achieved; or a

dreary existence in the gloomy land of Hel, if a man died a 'straw-death'. Another part of the soul-complex, the fetch, was a type of guardian spirit that would pass on to protect other family members. Another part might be reborn in close relatives, particularly those given the same name as their recently deceased kinsman.

The last part of the soul remained with the body after death, and through this soul-fragment, it was believed that the corpse took on a pseudo-life of its own within the grave, not as a ghost but as a corporeal being. In ancient times, men were often buried in huge burial mounds, surrounded with their possessions, horses, dogs and hawks—and sometimes even their slaves.

The dead that live on in their howes (barrows or burial mounds) are called *haugbui* (meaning "barrow-dweller"), and their main function is to remain within the barrow and protect it against those who would steal their treasure (see the example in the boxed text, from the Saga of Egil and Asmund)

There is also the *aptrgangr* (literally "after-goer", i.e. one who goes on after death). These were generally considered to be peaceful, rising from the grave to check on their families or to complete one task before permanently returning

## A Haugbui.

Aran, the blood-brother of Asmund, has just died suddenly.

The body was dressed for burial according to custom. Asmund had a burial mound raised over Aran and beside the corpse he put in the mound Aran's horse with a saddle and bridle, his banners and armour, his hawk and hound. Aran was seated in a chair in full armour.

Asmund had another chair brought into the mound and sat himself down there, after which the mound was covered up. During the first night, Aran got up from his chair, killed the hawk and hound, and ate them. On the second night he got up again from his chair, killed the horse and tore it to pieces; then he took great bites of horseflesh with his teeth, the blood streaming down from his mouth all the while he was eating. He offered to let Asmund share his meal, but Asmund said nothing. The third night Asmund became very drowsy, and the first thing he knew, Aran had got him by the ears and torn them off. Asmund drew his short sword and sliced off Aran's head, then he got some fire and burnt Aran to ashes. Asmund went to the rope and was hauled out of the mound which was then covered up again. Asmund took all the treasure from the mound with him.

The Saga of Egil and Asmund, translated by H Pálsson and P. Edwards, Penguin, 1985





to their graves. More dangerous is the *draug* (or draugr; meaning “harmful spirit”, plural is “draugar”), an animated corpse that comes out of its grave mound to travel abroad and do harm. Several of the Norse sagas mention them, most notably *Grettir’s Saga*, which pits the eponymous hero against Glam, the noisy and destructive draug. Finally, a draug that has been raised to do the malevolent will of a necromancer is known as a *dauðingr*.

Such a necromancer is called a *draugadróttin* (“lord of draugar”) in Scandinavia, or occasionally *heljamaðr* (“hel-man”), although this latter name specifically implies someone who works necromancy for evil purposes. The main difference between a draugadróttin and a Jewish Necromancer (such as those detailed in *Kabbalah*) is that they deal not with ghosts, but the living dead, drawing the draug from their graves and use them for their own purposes. This is a fearful profession, and not one for the weak at heart or the weak of body. Draugar are well-known for their incredible strength and their magical powers. The biggest problem for a draugadróttin is that once disturbed, draugar are difficult to return to the sleep of the dead. Even the most psychotic heljamaðr will hesitate before raising a draug.

All necromancers have the Necromancy Virtue, the Strong-Willed Virtue and the Hamingja Virtue (see below) at no cost. The hamingja, or guardian spirit is important to the necromancer, protecting him from the magical attacks of the draug during the control process. Without the protection of the hamingja, a draugadróttin would quickly become overcome by the lure of the grave, and descend into madness.

Unlike other Scandinavian wizards (see *Ultima Thule* for more details), necromancers may be either male or female. Nearly all necromancers are pagan, receiving the power of necromancy from Óðinn, the Norse god of the dead (one of his titles is “Draugadróttin”). Freyja the Goddess of witches accepts half of those slain in battle as a tribute, so she might also serve as a patron for necromancers.

**Starting Skills:** Speak Ancient Language 3, Bargain 1, Brawl 3, Leadership 3, Legend Lore 3, Occult Lore 3, Necromancy 4

Necromancers receive Age + 10 extra experience points at character creation.

## Necromantic Summoning

The rules for raising a draug are based on those given in *Kabbalah* (starting on p.111) but with a few significant changes, thus a full set of rules are given below.

To summon a draug, the body must be susceptible to necromantic magics. Elaborate rituals were performed in older times to prevent the deceased returning as a draug, which included removing the body from a building through a hole in the wall instead of the door, tying together the toes of the corpse and putting needles through the soles of the dead man’s shoes, to prevent it from walking.

Nowadays, these rituals are largely ignored, even by the most traditional of communities. In any case, these rituals were specifically designed to prevent a corpse rising in its own right, and do not generally deny the corpse to the powers of a necromancer. Still, necromancers and seithkonur (the Norse Cunning Folk) know of rituals that can be performed to deny the corpse to another, such as

that used by Möndull the dwarf in *Göngu-Hrólfs Saga*: *Möndull went twice widdershins round the slain; he blew and whistled in all directions, and recited ancient charms over them; then he said that these slain would so no more harm.*

A wizard wishing to enact such a ritual should make an Intelligence + Occult Lore +

aura stress roll; and this total is subtracted from all attempts by another necromancer. An 8+ will ensure that the deceased will not walk after death, whether ‘naturally’ (as a haugbui), or with the assistance of a necromancer.

A Christian burial will also make a corpse unsuitable for necromancy in most circumstances. Unlike pagan beliefs, Christian souls go straight to their final reward, leaving nothing but an empty shell behind. This is unfortunate for draugadróttin, as most of Scandinavia is Christian by 1220. Pockets of pagan belief still occur in the far north and in rural Sweden, but even if folk religion is still observed in secret, Christian burials are still performed in all but the most backward of regions. However, there is one way in which a Christian can be made into a draug. If the necromancy is performed before three days since death have elapsed, the spirit of the deceased is still resident in the corpse, and the ritual will work. After three days, the spirit has fled and the corpse will never be any-





thing more than a corpse. However, necromancers have discovered that draugar created in this way are never as powerful as those made from pagan corpses. They never have any of the supernatural powers of a draug, just the immunity to edged weapons and the terrible smell of death. Regeneration, prophecy, or any of the other powers ascribed to draugar are never present.

Note that state of decay does not affect the creation of a draugingr. As long as the corpse is at the very least a recognisable skeleton, and that the head is still present, it may be made into a draug. The summoning ritual puts blue-black skin and iron-hard muscle onto a bare skeleton.

Draugadróttin require a connection of some sort to the dead person before they can attempt to raise the corpse. The quality of such a connection also confers a connection bonus to the summoning roll. Note that these bonuses are cumulative. The dead are most often raised from atop of their howe—this is sufficient connection to attempt a summoning. At the very least the corpse must be within Near range. The necromancer may break into the howe to retrieve an arcane connection to assist in the summons, but in doing this he runs the risk of encountering the corpse as a haugbui. These beings are very dangerous, often having supernatural powers, and are usually not worth the risk. It is recorded in the sagas that some wizards raised corpses off the battlefield before they were buried.

| Connection                       | Bonus             |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Standing on top of a grave       | +0                |
| Arcane connection to to a corpse | +5                |
| Desendent of the deceased        | +2                |
| Knew deceased when alive         | +1                |
| Knows birth-name of corpse       | +3                |
| Spent season studying deceased   | Per + Legend Lore |

Norse necromancers can get no bonus for having summoned or encountered a draug before—this is one-time affair. The draug remains an animated corpse until destroyed.

As mentioned above, draugadróttin cannot summon a draug if they do not have a corpse. The process of studying a deceased person makes it easier for them to study. During the course of this study it is necessary to discover the place that the person was buried. Such investigation includes travelling to the place that the person was born or died, speaking to living relatives, learning the deeds performed and names gained by the person when they were alive. This allows them to identify with the dead man or woman, making the summoning process easier.

The summoning ritual takes 15 minutes per magnitude of the draug summoned, and costs two fatigue levels. Although gruelling, this ritual is the

necromancer's only clue as to how powerful the draug will be. Draug have a minimum Might of 10, and the older they are, the more powerful they are. The draugadróttin repeats his ritual and incantations over and over again until the spirit at last appears or the necromancer gives up.

Once performed, the necromancer rolls a stress die + Intelligence + Necromancy + Occult Lore + Connection bonus + aura. If the roll exceeds the draug's Might, the draug will sit up, or, if still buried (which is more often the case), burst up out of the ground. Draugar are nearly always belligerent

## Controlling a Draug

Very few draugar will serve a necromancer willingly. The essential intellectual principle of the deceased - call it the soul, the spirit or whatever—has gone, and what is left is the animal passions of the dead. In many cases, draugar are filled with wrath, particularly if they were killed in battle. They are not mindless, however, and the necromancer may forego the control process if he believes that the draug will do him no harm (if, for example, he is related to the deceased and is asking for a favour from his forebear).

Gaining control over a draug is performed in a way which differs quite dramatically from that of Jewish Necromancers. As soon as the corpse animates, or (if it is being called from a howe, as it bursts out of its grave), the draugadróttin must wrestle it to the ground and overpower it. He must then breathe his breath into the mouth of the draug. Draugar are well-known for their great strength, so this might seem a daunting task, but one who freshly rises is, for a moment, as strong as they were as a living man. This process is treated as unarmed combat (see p.169 of *Ars Magica* 4<sup>th</sup> Edition), with the necromancer trying to immobilise his opponent. Another advantage to raising a freshly slain corpse is that one can immobilise them more readily, getting them into a vulnerable position before they even wake up. In this case, the newly created draug gets only one chance to escape the necromancer. All the while that a necromancer is wrestling with a draug he must avoid making eye contact with the undead being. If this occurs, then the draug can steal away the necromancer's hamingja (Guardian Spirit), leaving him temporarily paralysed, giving the draug a chance to attack or escape with no resistance from the draugadróttin. It can be assumed that this is the result of a botched Brawling roll on behalf of the necromancer.

Once the draug has been immobilised (reduced to at least a -9 penalty on Attack and Defence, i.e. the equivalent of 3 Body Levels damage), the necromancer breathes a lungful of air into the mouth of the corpse, enslaving it to his will. At this





point the necromancer makes the control roll - stress die + Presence + Occult Lore + Leadership + aura against an ease factor equal to the draug's Might. For every five levels (or fraction thereof) by which the necromancer's roll exceeds the draug's Might, the necromancer may issue the draug one command without fear of reprisal or refusal.

A draugadróttin cannot attempt to control a draug until it is immobilised sufficiently that he can get his mouth over the mouth of the corpse. The battle with the animated corpse is part of the control process, and the necromancer cannot be assisted with the wrestling if the control attempt is to succeed. If the first control attempt fails, the necromancer may attempt again, at a cumulative +3 bonus to the draug's Might per attempt. If the necromancer can keep the draug immobilised during this time, then he or she need not wrestle the draug again to repeat a failed control roll. It should be noted, however, that the death-weakness will soon leave the draug and it will gain its full Strength and Stamina within about fifteen rounds of rising from its grave.

A necromancer can attempt to control a draug that they have not themselves summoned. However, such draugar will not be suffering the death-weakness, and will be very hard to subdue in the wrestling attempt.

Another difference with the necromancers that summon ghosts is that Norse necromancers do not have the ability to issue the command "Return peacefully from whence you came". Once raised, draugar remain until destroyed—which is not an easy prospect. If commanded to return to its grave it will do so, but will make nightly journeys from that grave, usually terrorising the local community until slain by a hero. Some necromancers will order a draug to perform an impossible task, or to travel to an area and wait there for nine years to dispose of a draug. However, most of these tasks require at least two commands, and such draugar have a tendency to return and exact vengeance on the one who disturbed their rest. Necromancers may also command other draugar to slay an unwanted walking corpse, or persuade or trick a warrior into doing so. Permanently killing a draug, however, is not easy (see below for details).

## Permitted Commands

While a necromancer has commands left over a draug, it cannot directly act against him or her.

However, the draug is basically malevolent towards a necromancer except in unusual circumstances, and will seek to do him or her harm if possible. A command of "Kill those warriors" may see the draug attack the weakest-looking of the opponents first, and fighting them one at a time, allowing the others to attack the necromancer. As a storyguide, always try and twist the command to the detriment of the necromancer—draugar are powerful, but dangerous to meddle with.

**Inform me:** The draug will supply information requested by the necromancer. The draug cannot lie, but it can tell half-truths or conceal information. The necromancer can ask three questions for each command, each of which deserves a full answer (i.e. not just "yes" or "no"). The draug can only answer questions that it knew the answers to before its death.

**Assist me:** The score in an Ability of Knowledge the draug had while alive will be added to any one related roll.

**Follow me:** If used as the necromancer's last command, the draug will follow the necromancer until sunrise or sunset (whichever comes first), at which point the draug is free of any obligation, and will likely attack the necromancer. If the necromancer has commands remaining, the draug will peacefully accompany the necromancer wherever possible.

**Journey:** The draug will travel to any place to which the necromancer has an arcane connection to, or that the deceased knew in

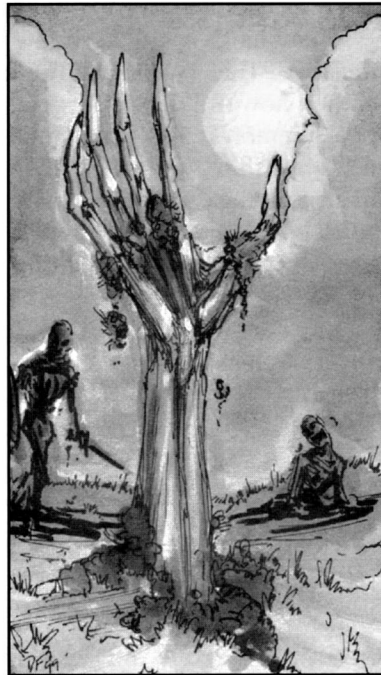
life. It will move at its maximum movement rate unless ordered otherwise.

**Perform for me:** The draug attempts one use of any of its powers or abilities as directed by the necromancer. This command is also used to order the draug into combat.

**Prophecy for me:** All draugar have knowledge about the future, brought back from the Otherworld. They can attempt to answer a single question, but naturally neither the draug or the necromancer know if the prophecy is true (a successful roll) or false (a failed or botched roll). See below for more details on a draug's ability to prophesise.

**Protect me:** For one magical attack, the necromancer resists with the draug's current Might. Note that in this round, the draug is undefended from magic.

Individual commands can easily be combined, for example, "Journey to Borgar Fjord and use your power to raise a wind to prevent Jarl Illugi from landing on Iceland" is two commands in one, combining Journey and Perform.





Note that Nordic necromancers are subject to more restrictions than other necromancers. Firstly, they must have the corpse in their general vicinity. They must wrestle with the undead being before they can attempt to control them. In addition, having a group of ghosts following someone around is far more versatile than being followed by a group of animated corpses, even if those corpses can be dressed up in concealing clothing. They cannot use the Immortalise command, and so their life-spans are restricted to that of a normal man. Finally, disposing of a draug is a lot more difficult than disposing of a ghost.

However, draugar on average more powerful than ghosts. They have physical abilities superior to most warriors, and are accredited with having many supernatural powers which can be of great use to the necromancer. In particular, the ability of some to shapechange or move through the earth can increase their usefulness to a draugadróttin. The necromancer has no control over the powers that a draug has, although the life lived by the draug before its demise might offer some clues. Pirates are more likely to have Wind Raising, dead wizards are more likely to have Shapeshifting.

## Hamingja

All necromancers are in touch with their Hamingja. The hamingja is part of the soul, a type of guardian spirit. They are passed through family lines. When someone with the haminja dies, it moves to guard the next member of his family that is born, which is why children are often named after recently dead relatives. Hamingjur usually manifest simply as good luck, but in some exceptional circumstances (including all necromancers) they manifest in a way similar to the +4 Virtue Ghostly Warder. However, it is not a ghost, but an ancestral spirit. They usually appear as female, and either as warrior women (when they are called valkyries) or as cowled women, often aged in appearance (when they are referred to as disir or norns). Only the draugadróttin and people succeeding a Second Sight roll can actually see the hamingja (note that draugadróttin cannot usually see spirits, nor can they see other people's hamingjur).

Unlike a Ghostly Warder, they are not limited in how long they can leave the necromancer's presence. Like Ghostly Warders, hamingjur have 20 experience points in various Abilities, and it is suggested that such allies have a Might of 20. The necromancer may see and speak with his hamingja

when it is nearby, and call it when it is not (without needing a special roll), but may not communicate with the spirit otherwise when it is away.

The hamingja performs a vital function to draugadróttin during his attempt to control draugar. Should a necromancer not have his hamingja on hand when attempting this, his soul is vulnerable to being stolen by the draug. In this case, he will lose his soul automatically if the necromancer fails his control roll, as well as if he botches a Brawl roll. This will destroy the necromancer's ability to use magic and send the draug on a frenzy of destruction, its powers augmented by the stolen soul. It may be possible for the necromancer to recover his soul, but this will be extremely difficult.

## Sample Summoning

Skuld is an embittered necromancer who has had a long running feud against Jarl Illugi the Stout. She finally decides that it is time to end the feud once and for all. She remembers that in her youth there was an outlaw called Skorri Flatnose that was finally caught by Illugi's father. As he was hanged, with his dying breath he uttered a curse on the jarl and his family. Skuld decides that she will make him a draug so he can fulfil that curse.

Skorri was buried at the cross-roads where he was hanged, and never given a Christian burial. For the whole winter, Skuld travels from farm to farm, talking to the elders about Skorri's exploits. She spends a few weeks helping a band of outlaws survive the bitterly cold weather, and begins to identify with her target. She visits the site of Skorri's biggest theft against the jarl, and even manages to locate a small portion of his pilfered treasures in an old tree-stump near his hideaway. Finally she decides that she has learnt enough about Skorri Flatnose, and travels to the cross-roads at midnight to begin her ritual.

Skuld scatters the recovered treasure on the bare earth and starts her incantations, scratching symbols onto the frozen earth. It is half an hour later that she sees the earth begin to heave (Skorri has a Magic Might of 14), and demands that Skorri comes forth. Skuld rolls 3 (her stress roll) + 2 (her intelligence) + 6 (her Necromancy skill) + 7 (her Occult Lore) + 4 (her connection bonus - Perception +0, Legend Lore 4) + 2 (infernal aura—this is a popular site for hanging) for a total of 24. The ground shakes then bursts open, and the hideous draug of Skorri Flatnose leaps forth from the earth.





Skuld wastes no time. She immediately pounces upon him in her attempt to pin him down. Skuld may be a woman, but she's also from troll-stock, and is deceptively strong. She has Str +3, Stm +0, Dex +1 and Qik +1, and a Brawl of 4 (specialised in wrestling). This means that her combat totals are Init +6, Atk +6, Def +6, Dmg +3 and Soak +1 (she's wearing a fur jerkin). Skuld's player gets lucky, rolling a 1 followed by a 8 for Initiative, for a total of 22. The draug gets an Initiative total of only 10. Skuld's player gets to choose the engagement range of Touch.

She rolls an 4 for her attack, giving her an Attack total of 14 and a Defence total of the same. The draug rolls a 4, so it has an Attack of 8 and a Defence of 9 (see the statistics for the draug below). Adding her first strike bonus of +12 to her attack means that Skuld manages to beat the draug's defence by a massive 17. She decides to immediately pin her opponent. Adding her Dmg bonus gives her +16. The draug has a Soak of only 1 (its Strength is +1 at the moment, and this Brawling Manoeuvre has Str + Enc instead of the usual Soak), meaning that she does the equivalent of 3 Body Levels damage. The draug's declared action of trying to claw her cannot be completed, and so it is temporarily immobilised (-9 to Attack and Defence). The ferocity of Skuld's attack manages to knock the draug off its feet, and Skuld ends up crouched on top of the beast, its wrists caught up in her vice-like grip. Without delay (as she is unsure how long she'll be able to restrain the beast) she leans down and closes her mouth over its disgusting decayed lips, and heaves a lungful of her breath into its rotting frame.

Her control roll is 7 (a stress die) +0 (her Presence) + 7 (her Occult Lore) +1 (her speciality in "draugar control" in Occult Lore) + 5 (her Leadership) + 2 (infernal aura) for a total of 21. Panting with the effort of the fight she stares the draug in the eyes and says "Sneak into the hall of Jarl Illugi Gautreksson and kill him." These two commands are all she has, and she hopes that the jarl's men will slay the draug after he has killed the jarl. Just in case they don't, Skuld decides to spend a few weeks with her nephew, a powerful warrior who'll protect her if the draug comes looking for her.

## Draugar

**Magic Might:** 10 (or more, see Powers)

**Size:** +1 to +2

**Characteristics:** Cun 0, Str +7\* (supernatural), Prs -5 (hideous), Dex -3 (bloated), Per +1 (tracker), Sta +10\* (undead), Com -2 (croaking), Qik -1 (grave-stiff)

\*Just after being raised for the first time, their Strength and Stamina are between +1 and +3

**Personality Traits:** Angry +5, Vengeful +3, Destructive +2

**Virtues and Flaws:** none

**Description:** Draugar (singular draug) are as black as death or corpse pale. Their bodies have swollen to enormous size, and their faces twisted into evil visages. They carry the foul smell of death with them which is difficult to disguise. They are usually able to speak, in a croaking mockery of their voice when alive. The longer that they have been dead, the more powerful they are.

**Abilities:** Brawl (claws) 3, Track (treasure) 4, Awareness (foes) 2, Athletics (running) 4

Draugar also retain most abilities they had when alive. However, social skills are no longer usable, and some other skills, such as rogue skills, can no longer be used effectively



### Combat Stats:

| Weapon | Init | Atk | Dfn | Dmg |
|--------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| Claws* | +7   | +4  | +5  | +11 |

\*the draug attacks with both claws

**Soak:** 12

**Fatigue:** Draugar do not tire, nor can they be knocked unconscious.

**Body Levels:** Unhurt ✓, Hurt 0, Hurt 0, Lt. Wnds -1, Lt. Wnds -1, Med. Wnds -3, Hvy Wnds -5

### Powers (All Draugar)

**Regeneration:** The draug heals one body level per round, even after "death". Burning, dismemberment or drowning is required to prevent this.

**Immunity to Edged Weapons:** Edged weapons, including spears and arrows cannot penetrate their thick hide. Weapons affected have an effective damage bonus of zero

**Stink:** All within 10 paces of the draug must make a Stamina stress roll of 6+ or act with a -3 penalty to all rolls. Botching induces vomiting and incapacitation for (10-Stm) rounds. Necromancers get used to this death-stench, and are able to ignore it after a time.



**Prophecy:** All draugar can prophesise the future. The accuracy of these visions is up to the storyguide, but it should be considered as the Divination Exceptional Talent at a level equal to its magnitude.

### Additional powers

Each draug has none or more of the following powers. Add 2 Might for each after the first. Each successful use means a loss of one point of Stamina (and Soak). They tend to have more powers the older they are.

**Rock Swimming (MuCo/Te 40):** The draug may “swim” through stone or earth. It must make a Stm roll of 15+ to enter or leave the earth. It moves at half walking speed.

**Fall of Darkness (PeIg 25):** The draug creates a circle of darkness twenty paces in diameter. No light may enter or leave this circle.

**Fearful Aura (CrMe 15):** The draug may attempt to panic one opponent a round. If the panic is not successfully resisted (Brave roll of 9+), the target will flee in terror until out of sight of the draug.

**Wind Raising (ReAu 20):** The draug can raise gale-force winds but may not change their direction once they are raised.

**Confuse (ReMe 15):** The draug may attempt to confuse one opponent a round, if successful, an opponent must make an Int roll of 9+ each round to take the action he had intended to. A 12+ ends the effect. Any lower roll means that the character is confused and will do something else. A victim always strikes last in combat, and has -1 to all attacking and defending rolls.

**Mist Raising (CrAu 10):** The draug can raise a thick mist which resists being dissipated by the wind. The mist smells of corpses.

**Curse (PeXX 30+):** The creature may use the Curse Talent (see Lion of the North) with a score of 5

**Second Sight (InMe/Co 30):** Like the Exceptional Talent of the same name, with a score of 5

**Shapeshifting (MuCo 30+):** The draug can change shape as if it had the Shapeshift Talent (see Lion of the North) at score 5

**Vis:** Up to 5 pawns of Corpus in one organ (heart, liver, stomach, spleen, etc.)

Permanently slaying a draug is not simple. Because of their regeneration power, reducing them to Incapacitated is not sufficient. There are a number of methods recommended by lore of permanently disposing of draugar—not all may be effective on any given draug.

- **Decapitation.** Some legends say that the body must be wrestled to the ground first, before decapitation. Because of their resilience to edged weapons, removing their head is not an easy prospect. Three body levels

damage must be delivered in a single aimed blow to decapitate a draug. Many legends state that a weapon from the draug’s own barrow is the only sword that could decapitate a draug. It may be that draugar do not have the same immunity to edged weapons against those weapons that they themselves used while alive

- **Immolation.** Burning will certainly send a draug to eternal rest. One must be careful, however, about the disposal of the ashes. In the *Eyrbyggja Saga*, Thorolf Twist-Foot came back as a draug and he was finally slain and burnt by Thorodd. However, a cow licked up the ashes of the draug that the wind had scattered, and she soon gave birth to a demon bull who ended up killing Thorodd. One of the most common ways of dealing with draugar is to combine decapitation and immolation—removing the head of the corpse and placing it between the buttocks of the body before burning both and burying the ashes well away from any habitation.

- **Drowning** is another way of disposing of a draug. They must be held immobile under water until they cease their struggling, which is well beyond any human limits of endurance, given their monstrous Stamina.

### Nota bene

*Aptrgangr* is pronounced “APT-gang”

*Draug* is pronounced DROW-g, with the “drau” element rhyming with “now”.

*Draugadróttin* is pronounced DROW-gah-DROAT-tin, the “drót” element rhyming with “boat”. The plural is *draugadróttingar*.

*Dauðingr* is pronounced DOW-thing

*Heljamaðr* is pronounced HELL-ya-math. The plural is *Heljamenn*.

The final ‘r’ in the Old Norse spellings (*aptrgangr*, *draugr*), is rolled with the tip of the tongue, or omitted altogether.

### Thorgeir Skald

**Vocation:** Draugadróttin

**Age:** 27

**Size:** +0

**Characteristics:** Int: +1 (witty), Per +0, Str +2 (powerful grip), Stm +0, Prs +1 (fair-faced), Com +2 (moving storyteller), Dex +0, Qik -1 (bumbling)

**Personality Traits:** Inquisitive +2, Charming +3, Ingenious +2

**Virtues and Flaws:** Skald +1, Obligation (to Jarl Tostig) -1, Audio Eidetic Memory +3, Driving Goal (become the most famous skald) -1, Free Expression +1, Overconfident -2, Inspirational +1, Dark Secret (the source of his material) -1, Cautious with Brawl +1, Lame -2, Patron (Jarl Tostig) +2, Terrors (enclosed spaces) -2





Thorgeir Skald

**Abilities:** Speak East Norse (Svear dialect) 5, Speak Old Norse (Geatish dialect) 3, Bargain (draugar) 2, Brawl (holds) 4, Craft Sagas (heroic sagas) 4, Craft Poety (ljodhatr) 5, Leadership (draugar) 3, Legend Lore (dead heroes) 3, Necromancy (dead warriors) 4, Occult Lore (summoning the dead) 3, Storytelling (sagas) 3

**Confidence:** 3

**Reputation:** Skald (regional) 1

**Decrepitude Points:** none

**Afflictions:** none

### Other Information

#### Combat Stats:

| Weapon    | 1st | Atk | Dfn | Dmg |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Fist      | +4  | +4  | +4  | +2  |
| Wrestling | +5  | +5  | +5  | +3  |

**Body Levels:** Unhurt ✓, Hurt 0, Lt. Wnds -1, Med. Wnds -3, Hvy -5, Incap. X

**Fatigue Levels:** Fresh ✓, Winded 0, Weary -1, Tired -3, Dazed -5, Uncon. X

**Encumbrance:** +0 (Str:+2 plus Load: 0)

**Fatigue (add Wpn skill):** +0

**Soak:** +0 (no armour)

**History & Appearance:** Thorgeir is one of the best skalds in Svear lands, or so he thinks. He resides at the hall of one Jarl Tostig, and is a skilled regaler of heroic tales and epic poems. He is able to inspire men to do great deeds

through the examples of his tales, and Jarl Tostig considers him to be one of his most valued retainers. Thorgeir is even more skilled at the composition of poems and sagas. He is particularly adept at the poetic style called ljodhatr ('song measure'), used primarily to tell ballads about the deeds of famous heroes. Not only does he have an excellent memory, and is able to memorise stories and poems after a single telling, but his poems are well known for their wealth of details, especially with regards to the details of the heroes. The level of detail is such that some say he must have known the person about whom the poem is written, but that is impossible, claim others, as these heroes are many hundreds of years old....

Thorgeir has a genuine gift for poetry, but he also has a gift for necromancy as well. He uses his magic to gather his material. He has discovered that by composing a *drapa*, a poem of praise to the draug he is planning to awaken, he is able to create a strong connection to them equal to his Craft Poetry skill. This can generally put the draug in a conducive frame of mind for bargaining. Thorgeir has never raised a draug in anger, or commanded one to do anything other than tell him its life-story. He has been extremely lucky so far in that the draugar he has raised have been happy with the prospect of being immortalised by his word-craft. He always ensures that he conducts the rite that will ensure them that their rest will remain undisturbed after he has gained the information he desires.

Nevertheless, Thorgeir is prepared for the eventuality that one day he will encounter a hostile draug. Despite being lame from birth, and thus unable to make an effective warrior, he partakes in *glima* contests. Glima is a type of Norse wrestling that specialises in hold and pins, and he usually does quite well, for he is not hampered by his deformed legs. This discipline with the rules of glima allow Thorgeir to be more careful when wrestling, and less likely to make a mistake.

Thorgeir is tall and wirey, with a surprising strength. He has reddish-blond hair which he keeps neatly braided, and long moustaches, though he keeps no beard. When Thorgeir was younger, the necromancer who taught him buried him alive so that he could get in touch with death. This experience frightened the life out of him, and it was only the prompt arrival of his haminja that allowed him to keep his sanity. Thorgeir has never been able to stand enclosed places since. For those who are able to see her, his hamingja takes the form of a beautiful dis (minor goddess), who adores his poetry and sits in rapt attention whenever he recites one of his lays. Thorgeir believes that she is the poetic inspiration that allows him to compose such compelling poems. ☒



# De Singulis Conventuum

This is the first of a set of four covenants which will be described in *Mythic Perspectives*. For the autumn issue this year, we are describing an Autumn covenant, and the remaining three will likewise correspond to the issue's season. The covenants are described using ArM4's covenant rules, although some book types may come from WGRE. Each covenant in this series should be adaptable to your uses, whether you choose to place your saga there or use it as an NPC covenant.

## Ripening in the Fullness of Time:

# Hnchak Covenant

by John J. Kasab

**H**nchak covenant, like many covenants in Autumn, is a powerful covenant, with many resources available to its magi. However, it is beginning to stagnate, as the magi begin to rest upon their laurels and turn their focus inward.

Hnchak covenant is located on the Armenian plateau, in eastern Anatolia,

just south of the Caucasus mountains. This region has always been between neighboring empires, and the typical Ars Magica period is no exception. Mundane threats abound in the region: the Seljuk Turks have overrun the region, but the Byzantines still threaten to the west, the Arabs to the south, and the Mongols have made scouting raids from the north and east.

However, Hnchak was chosen not only for its suitability for magic, but also for the rugged terrain and remote location. Here, the magi have some shelter from the world around them as they continue their studies.

This article describes the major features of the covenant and then some important characters. The numerical scores given are generated using the guidelines in the Covenants chapter of ArM4, but the specific details for each rating are spread throughout the article.

Covenant Characteristic Scores

|           |    |             |    |
|-----------|----|-------------|----|
| Site      | +3 | Relations   | -2 |
| Buildings | +4 | Improvement | +4 |
| Defenses  | +5 | Library     | +5 |
| Stores    | -2 | Mystical    | +5 |

## Physical setting

Hnchak covenant is built on a hill in one of the less accessible valleys leading to the Caucasus mountains. As is typical of the area, summers are hot and dry, while winters are cold, with a fierce wind coming from the northeast. The surrounding region is hilly, with mountains visible in the distance.

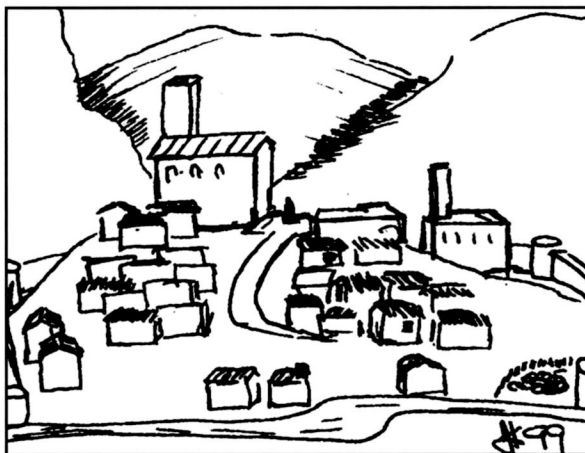
A small river flows from north to south along the western edge of the covenant, and forms the major line of defense on that side. The river is fed

by melting snow from the mountains to the north, and runs fast and clear.

There is room for up to eight magi at Hnchak covenant. The four most senior magi use the larger sancta (1), which are clustered near the Great Hall (2). The remaining magi have use of the smaller sancta near the Scriptorium (3). The larger sancta were built by the founders of

the covenant, and the others were built later as the covenant grew. The larger sancta have tiled roofs and stone walls, and the laboratories give a +1 bonus to activities. The smaller sancta have not had such improvements made, since the magi tend to move into a larger sanctum building first.

The hill on which the covenant is centered rises about 20 feet from the river's edge. The major covenant buildings are built on the ridge of the hill, which gives them a commanding presence in the valley. The Great Hall (2) is built on the very top of the hill, and stands 30 feet tall. A watchtower extends an additional 20 feet, giving an excellent view. The tower also contains a great bell, from which the covenant gets its name ("hnchak" means





"bell" in Armenian). The Great Hall is made of stone with a tiled roof. The walls inside are decorated with tapestries with mystical and religious themes, and the Hall is furnished in a manner befitting magnates. The temperature is magically moderated within the building, making it comfortable at all times of the year.

In front of the Great Hall is the main square of the covenant. A stele, or inscribed stone monument, stands in the center of the square. The stele lists the names of the magi who have joined Hnchak covenant, and records major events in the history of the covenant.

Across the square from the Great Hall is the Scriptorium (3), which stands about 15 feet tall. The Scriptorium is also made of stone, and has a lined, tiled roof. The Scriptorium houses the covenant's library and related materials. Along the south edge of the building is an arcade which is somewhat shorter than the main part of the building. The arcade has several writing tables, each of which is set in a large window. This arrangement provides ample natural light for copying or studying the texts of the library.

South of the Scriptorium is the Turb Barracks (4). Because of the mundane threat, Hnchak covenant maintains a garrison of 150 footmen. The unmarried grogs live in the barracks building, which is a two-story stone building with an armory in the basement. The walls of the barracks are stout, and the building could be used as a keep in a pinch. The barracks building also has a watchtower, which rises ten feet from the roof.

The gatehouse (5) in the south wall provides the only entrance through the walls surrounding the covenant grounds. The walls are made of stone, stand about ten feet tall, and are about nine feet thick. The towers (6) along the wall help strengthen the defenses, especially near the river. The hill's slope enhances the effect of the walls. There had been a ditch around the wall as well, but it has almost completely filled in from neglect.

The flocks of sheep and the few goats kept at the covenant are placed in the sheep pen (7) during the winter or times of danger. There are several storage sheds (10) along the north wall of the covenant. These sheds store food for the people and fodder for the sheep and other animals. Because of a string of bad years, there are no surplus stores of food or other supplies, al-

though in a moderately good year the covenant generates a surplus equivalent to 50 pounds of silver.

A blacksmith (8) has a forge near a pool in the river, and a tanner (9) has a building and pits downstream from there. A potter also has a workplace near the blacksmith's. The other craftsmen in the covenant generally work from their homes.

## Customs

Cicero Saturni takes his obligation to share knowledge seriously, although his colleagues have wisely kept him from sharing too freely. Hnchak welcomes Hermetic visitors, especially those who had made arrangements to visit, and will accommodate them in guest houses downhill from the junior

magi's sancta. Uninvited Hermetic visitors will be given a chance to explain themselves, although they may not have the free access granted to invitees.

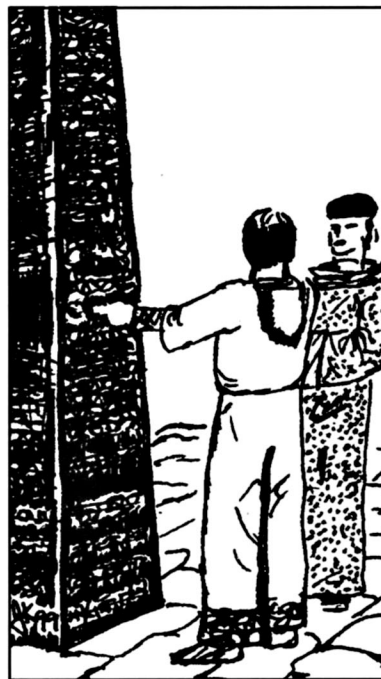
Hnchak also welcomes mundane scholars to study from and add to the wisdom of the library. However, given its remote location, uninvited mundane visitors are treated with suspicion. The covenant usually sends people out to obtain goods not available on site; merchants do not visit to trade.

In return for granting someone study rights in the library, Hnchak requires that the magus or scholar provides something of value in return. Generally, this has meant contributing a new volume. In recent years, though, visitors have been encouraged to prepare a commentary on the

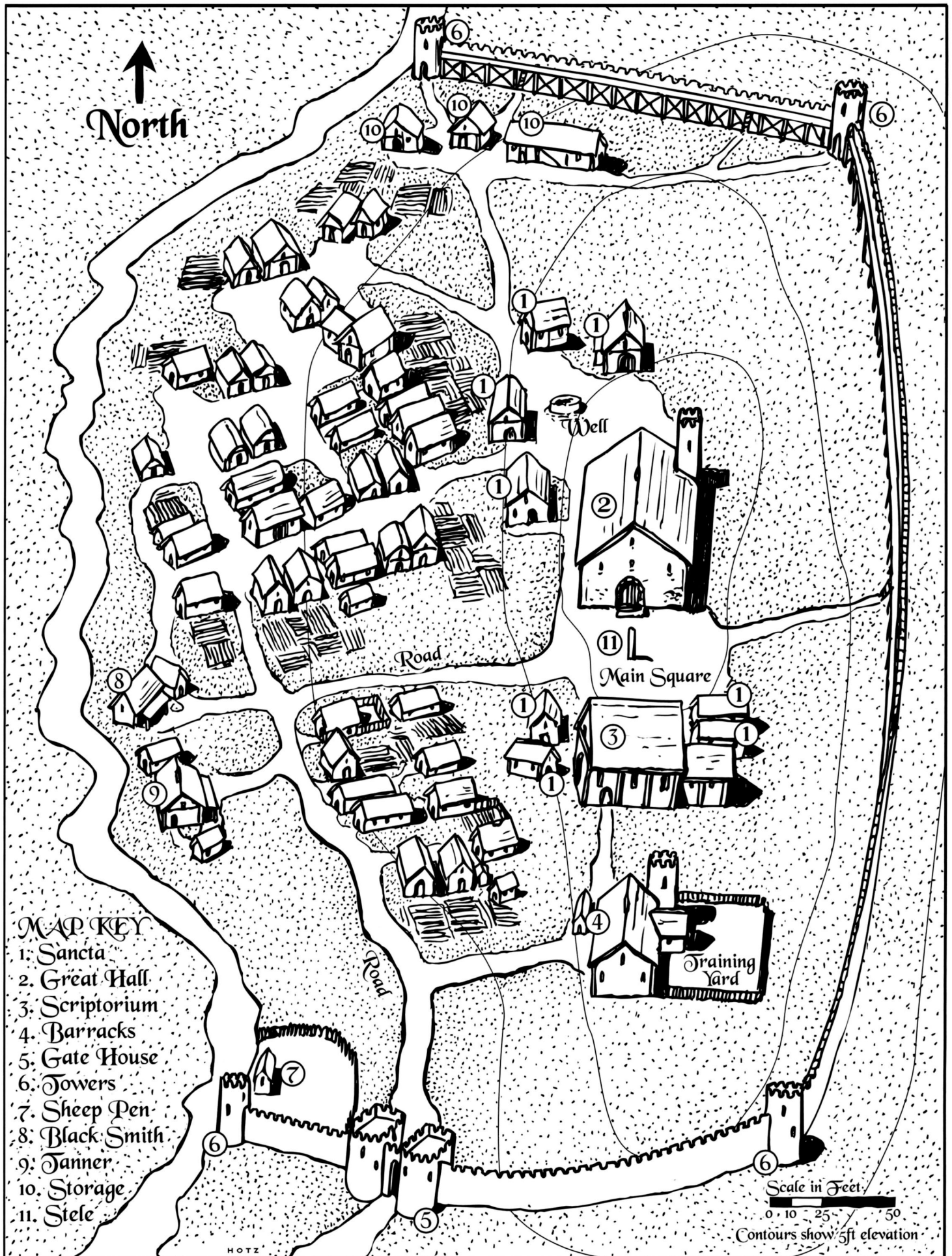
work they are studying, and leave a copy of the commentary in the library.

The covenant charter grants the senior magi certain privileges. For example, any decision taken by the council may be blocked by dissenting votes from any two senior magi. While this provision was designed to keep the senior magi firmly in charge of the covenant, it has occasionally stymied action in the past when the senior magi strongly disagreed with each other. In recent years, the council has been fairly calm, but it may just be that they have been avoiding thornier issues.

Also, senior magi have first right of access to texts in the library, pawns of vis, and the other resources of the covenant. (The senior magi resolve conflicts amongst themselves over resources.) Since the covenant has been strong and flush, this has not been an issue, although it could be as the years pass.









By custom, when a senior magus leaves or passes on, the most senior of the junior magi is promoted, and moves his laboratory into one of the sanctum buildings near the Great Hall. This tradition means that junior magi do not invest too heavily in improving their labs, although they may construct items which can be moved to the new sanctum.

## Relations with others

Hnchak covenant was founded in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century, during a period of relative stability in the region. Of the four founding magi, three were from the Theban tribunal, and the fourth, local. However, since most of the following recruits were from the Armenian plateau, and the neighboring regions, the covenant became less interested in being tied to the Theban Tribunal, and switched its affiliation to the Tribunal of the Levant.

The covenant is able to supply many of its needs itself, but over half of the goods needed come from trade. Fortunately, being in Asia Minor, Hnchak covenant has excellent access to supplies. A trading post on a major east-west route lies within two days' travel, and the covenant can easily obtain items considered exotic in western tribunals. Other than a few peasants, few people live much closer than the trading post, and only a handful of people stumble across the covenant each year.

Because Hnchak covenant resists the Theban Tribunal's expansionist pressures in eastern Anatolia, they have made enemies within that tribunal. In particular, Hnchak has had a long-running rivalry with an Autumn covenant in the Theban tribunal. In addition, the covenant has made an enemy of a major baron who has designs on their valley. He dedicates a goodly part of his resources (15%) to curtailing Hnchak's influence. However, the covenant is on good terms with the local lord, Gevorg.

Over the years, Hnchak has gained several reputations. The merchants passing through the region know of the covenant as a group of scholars (+1).

Hnchak covenant has a reputation within the Levant of being a survivor (+1) for holding out against the encroachments of mundanes and the Theban Tribunal. However, within the Theban tribunal, the magi of Hnchak are denigrated as being a bunch of eccentric researchers (-2). Lastly, the locals living in the area fear the strange monks (-2) living in the fortified monastery.

The filius of one of the magi currently resides at Durenmar, the Domus Magnus for House Bonisagus, which gives them access to information from the central tribunals. In addition, Hnchak maintains contact with a spring covenant in the Levant founded by a former apprentice. The spring covenant is too busy establishing itself to provide much assistance to Hnchak.

## The Magi and the Arcane

### Senior magi

#### Cicero Saturni of House Bonisagus

Cicero is the philosophical leader of Hnchak, and its most senior magus. He has been the impetus behind the research projects at the covenant over the last several decades. Cicero Saturni is unusual for a magus, especially a Bonisagus, in that he is a devout Christian (see "On Serving God and His Church", WGRE, p.11). He was a junior magus when the covenant decided to reassign itself to the Tribunal of the Levant, but he has not involved himself much in Hermetic politics, preferring to focus on his research.

Cicero's research goal is to reconcile Hermetic magic with Divine influence. He is currently trying to develop a form of Hermetic magic that would not be penalized by the Dominion. The idea is to find a so-called Divine Magic that would be analogous to the Faerie Magic Talent used by Merinitas. He has made this goal his life's work, and is conscious of the limited time he has left to him on this earth.



Cicero Saturni of House Bonisagus



Since sorcery is not condoned by the church, Cicero's ideas are mildly heretical; however, he genuinely believes that the Gift is a gift from God, and that magi are thus obligated to show a good example of Christian living, even with the added temptations that come with magical power. For example, Cicero actively discourages development of improved divination magics, since divining the future of a man diminishes his God-given free will.

He has therefore sponsored theologians at the covenant from Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions. (Cicero himself follows the Armenian church.) The library reflects this interest, with several volumes on theology being available.

Cicero is a magical generalist, although he is particularly strong in Vim magics. He is a strong magical theorist, as well as a learned theologian and scholar.

Cicero has trained a few apprentices over the years. His last filius, Ne Lucem tuam sub Arce Occultes, was invited to join Durenmar as part of a research compilation project he was working on. Occultes corresponds regularly with his parens, although his interests are in other areas.

Physically, Cicero appears to be an old man. He is balding, but what hair remains is white. His beard is neatly trimmed, and further accent his prominent cheekbones. He tends to wear white robes with a modest trim, although he often has pouches and purses hanging off of his belt, depending on what he is doing. He is not particularly tall—only 5'6" or so—but has a fairly commanding presence.

### Suni of House Criamon

Suni is a Criamon who has been profoundly influenced by Sufi mysticism. He believes that the Sufis have a window on the Enigma that is worth looking through, even if it does not reveal the whole.

Suni was trained by Alvar Dawla of House Criamon at Estancia-es-Karida in the Iberian Tribunal (see p.103 of *The Tribunals of Hermes: Iberia*)



Suni of House Criamon

many years ago. However, on leaving apprenticeship, Suni decided to go closer to the source of Sufi wisdom, and left for Persia. He spent several years traveling through the region, and finally settled at Hnchak covenant.

Like Cicero Saturni, Suni is also trying to reconcile established religious thought with Hermetic teaching. However, while Cicero wants to amalgamate the two, Suni is using insights from Sufi mysticism to better understand the Enigma. Suni has encouraged Sufis and other Muslims to study at Hnchak covenant. This has occasionally caused some problems, as Suni is both cryptic and a poor judge of character. Sometimes a scholar invited by Suni to the cov-

enant did not realize exactly where he was going, and caused trouble with the covenant and other scholars once he arrived.

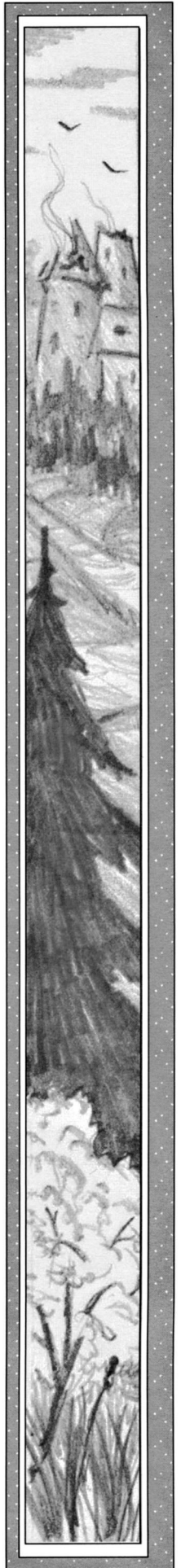
Suni is an Intéllego specialist, although he is also strong in the Arts of Corpus, Mentem, and Vim. He has a strong understanding of Enigmatic Wisdom, even for a Criamon, and has also studied Islamic Lore, Islamic Theology, and Magic Theory.

Suni looks to be at the young end of middle age, although he is the second most senior magus at the covenant. He has long, dark hair, which is usually gathered into a braid. His complexion is dusky, and while he has a typical set of tattoos for a Criamon, none have been placed on his face, although he does have some on his neck. He generally wears the plain robes of a hermit, often of undyed or black cloth.

### Hripsma Khorenatsi Ex Miscellanea

Hripsma Khorenatsi is from a magical tradition originally from the Caucasus. Her parens joined the Order of Hermes, and worked to make her traditional system of magic compatible with Hermetic theory. Hripsma is the result of this pioneering work: she has a command of Hermetic magic, but in the framework of her native traditions.

Hripsma's magical tradition involves using patterned textiles to focus magical energies. For example, wizards in this tradition developed leg-





endary flying carpets. In the original tradition, the choice of fibers, dyes, knots, and patterns all work together to create magical effects of varying potency.

In adapting this style to Hermetic magic, the requirement for pattern and form in textiles is still present. Thus, she needs to have prepared an item, be it a scarf, rug, or similar, that has a pattern associated with a particular formulaic spell. (This is a Necessary Condition.) In this respect, she is like a Verditius magus (see Follower of Verditius, ArM4 p.26). Larger items, such as robes or larger scarves, can hold patterns for several spells.

Since she is the first of her line to have any Hermetic training, she suffers from an inability to cast Spontaneous magic. However, she managed to train her filius Nerses (see below) in this important Hermetic spell-casting method.

Most of her laboratory research has been on refining the integration of Hermetic magic and her magical tradition. In addition, she has spent time developing formulaic versions of spells that others might spontaneously cast and the associated casting patterns.

As might be expected, Hripsma is a master weaver. She also knows which dyes and yarns are most suitable for her work. Her skill at weaving helps her prepare durable items for her laboratory and for others. (She has the +2 Virtue Mage-Smith, WGRE, p.60.)

Hripsma has a commanding, matronly look. She is a little over five feet tall, and has a square face, creased with age. Her hair has gone silver, although it is still quite thick. She tends to wear robes appropriate for a scholar, that have been embroidered on the hems and cuffs. Also, she favors wearing headscarfs of silk that have been embroidered or hand-painted in abstract patterns of her own design. The particular clothes she will be wearing will depend on what spells she wishes to have ready.



**Hripsma Khorenatsi Ex Miscellanea**

## Vardan Naghash Ex Miscellanea

Vardan is the latest in a long line of astrologers from the region. He came to Hnchak covenant because it was local, and because the site was amenable to his observations. However, to avoid offending Cicero Saturni's sensibilities, Vardan does not prepare horoscopes for members of the covenant. Vardan does regularly prepare forecasts for the covenant's friend, Lord Gevorg, and his family, which provides a small, independent income for the magus.

Vardan generally makes his observations from the watchtower atop the Great Hall. He keeps irregular hours, and the grogs will look for Vardan first should a traveler arrive in the night.

An Intéllego specialist, Vardan is also skilled with Auram and Imáginem magics. His magic is keenly tied to astrological cycles, and he has refused to undertake travel or other activities because of unfavorable alignments of stars and planets. He is quick to point out the instances in which his predictions proved correct, although he will describe the actual events in a way that supports his earlier predictions. However, he is never entirely wrong when he does make a prediction, which has boosted his reputation amongst the covenantfolk.

Vardan is a chubby man, who looks to be at the late end of middle age. He has a full beard, and his hair and beard are salt-and-pepper in color. He typically

wears robes that have been elaborately decorated with mystical symbols, especially ones with astrological significance.

## Junior magi

### Gignere Ungulustsi of House Verditius

Gignere is one of the most widely traveled magi at the covenant, since he originally comes from the Stonehenge Tribunal. His parens was part



of a long line of Verditius magi who had been members of Ungulus covenant. Gignere did not stay there long after his apprenticeship, traveling first to the Norman kingdom of Sicily, and from there into the Levant.

Gignere does not share the research interests of the two most senior magi, preferring instead more traditional pursuits for a Verditius. His interest in Hnchak covenant is that it has the resources and craftsmen to support his projects. In return, he has been making some small items to win friends among the covenfolk, such as the Girdle of Atlas (see WGRE, p.112), who in return are more willing to put up with Gignere's obscure requests.

He has been slowly collecting the raw materials to start on a major project, which seems to involve legends from Persia of clockwork animals. Gignere is hoping to develop a marvellous device that will make his name in the Order.

Gignere is particularly good with the Arts of Rego, Herbam, and Terram. He has some training as a whitesmith, but he has also picked up some woodworking skills as part of doing his work. He is a native speaker of English, but has learned enough Armenian to make himself understood.

Gignere is a tall, gangly man with blond hair and a pale complexion. Although he has finer robes for more formal occasions, he tends to wear clothes typical for a craftsman, such as a tunic and leggings, when working in his laboratory.

### Iustinian of House Guernicus

Iustinian has been a member of Hnchak covenant for some years. He joined Hnchak in part because he felt his career as a quaesitor would be enhanced by associating with one of the more powerful covenants in the tribunal. In addition, Iustinian was trained in Constantinople, and his quaesitorial associates in the Theban Tribunal encouraged him to join Hnchak in the hope that he would be able to bring Hnchak back into their tribunal.

Over the years, though, he has developed an attachment to Hnchak, which has changed his attitudes and his goals. His first interest is still in tribunal politics, which is a natural extension of his post as quaesitor. But, Iustinian has come to realize that he has more influence keeping Hnchak in the Tribunal of the Levant than he would by if it returned to Thebes.

Since his ambitions in the tribunal require a strong power base, he has begun to turn his attention to the covenant's affairs. Iustinian feels that the senior magi are too wrapped up in their projects to pay attention to where Hnchak is going, and that the other junior magi are willing to rest on Hnchak's laurels.

Iustinian has been cultivating his relationship with the autocrat, Smbat Narekatsi, in order to gain more influence over day-to-day affairs. As a junior

magus, Iustinian is limited in the reforms he can institute, but he is clever and ambitious, and will likely find a way to revitalize the covenant.

Iustinian, a younger man, has black hair and very dark brown eyes. He wears a neatly trimmed beard, but above the beard he seems to have a perpetual shadow of stubble. He has a strong, square jaw, but he is beginning to spread around the middle as he ages.

### Thermotseos of House Flambeau

**Age:** 21

**Size:** 0

**Characteristics:** Int +3, Per +1, Str 0, Stm +1, Pre 0, Com -1, Dex 0, Qik 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Affinity with Ignem +3, Immune to Dysentery (+6 Soak) +2, Quick Mastery +2, Short-Lived Magic -2, Haunted -2, Warped Magic -1, Judged Unfairly -1, Bad Reputation -1

**Personality Traits:** Brave +2, Fiery temper +3

**Reputation:** Destructive (local mundanes) -2

**Abilities:** Affinity with Ignem 3, Awareness 2, Brawling 1, Certamen 2, Concentration 1, Magic Theory 4, Order of Hermes Lore 1, Parma Magica 4, Penetration 2, Scribe Greek 2, Scribe Latin 3, Speak Arabic 2, Speak Armenian 1, Speak Greek 4, Speak Latin 5, Survival 1

**Arts:** Creo 11, Intéllego 0, Muto 0, Perdo 3, Rego 3, Animal 0, Aquam 0, Auram 0, Corpus 3, Herbam 0, Ignem 11, Imaginem 0, Mentem 0, Terram 0, Vim 0  
sigil: All spells generate waste heat (part of Warped Magic Flaw)

**Spells:** Bind Wound (CrCo 10), Ball of Abysmal Flame (CrIg 35), Breath of Vulcan (CrIg 30), Arc of Fiery Ribbons (CrIg 25), Lamp without Flame (CrIg 10), Soothe the Raging Flames (PeIg 15), Ward Against Heat and Flames (ReIg 25)

Thermotseos is a recently gauntleted magus, and is only a little older than Nerses. He came to Hnchak covenant because he heard there was trouble in the area, and thought that his talents could be put to use. While mundane conflicts are rife in the area, when the senior magi consider external threats, they prefer to lie low rather than assert themselves. Needless to say, Thermotseos is chomping at the bit for some action, but isn't quite powerful enough to seek it out himself.

Thermotseos is also from the Theban Tribunal originally, although he is not interested in politics. In the absence of any action, he has been working on a spell that would literally give him a smoldering glare.

Thermotseos is a young man, although he has started growing out a beard. He has an olive complexion, black hair, and brown eyes. He tends to wear very loudly colored clothing, favoring yellows, oranges, and reds. Fortunately, Hnchak is near the trade routes that bring these dyes, so he can indulge himself.





## Nerses Zakarian Ex Miscellanea

**Age:** 23

**Size:** 0

**Characteristics:** Int +4, Per 0, Str -1, Stm 0, Pre -1, Com 0, Dex +2, Qik 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Great Int +2, Mage-Smith +2, Subtle Magic +2, Well Known +1, Common Fear of Fires -2, Slow Caster -2, Hedge Wizard -1, Necessary Condition -1, Weird Magic -1

**Personality Traits:** Ambitious -1, Creative +2

**Reputation:** Quality weaver (merchants at trading post) +2, Hedge wizard (Order of Hermes) -3

**Abilities:** Armenia Lore 2, Awareness 2, Concentration 1, Craft Dyer 2, Craft Embroidery 2, Craft Weaver 5, Finesse 2, Magic Theory 4, Order of Hermes Lore 1, Parma Magica 2, Scribe Armenian 3, Scribe Greek 3, Scribe Latin 3, Speak Armenian 4, Speak Latin 3

**Arts:** Creo 6, Intéllego 6, Muto 0, Perdo 0, Rego 6, Animal 5, Aquam 0, Auram 6, Corpus 5, Herbam 6, Ignem 0, Imaginem 0, Mentem 0, Terram 5, Vim 0 sigil: patterns manifest nearby in dust, mist, plants, etc.

**Spells:** The Gentle Beast (ReAn 20), Touch of the Pearls (InAq 5), Charge of the Angry Winds (CrAu 15), Wings of the Soaring Wind (ReAu 20), Gentle Touch of the Purified Body (CrCo 15), Despair of the Quivering Manacles (ReCo 15), Hunt for the Wild Herb (InHe 15), Eyes of the Treacherous Terrain (InTe 20), Edge of the Razor (MuTe 5), Sense the Nature of Vis (InVi 5), Aegis of the Hearth (ReVi 15)

Nerses was trained by Hripsma (see above), and decided to stay on at Hnchak covenant after being gauntleted. Although he no longer works in Hripsma's laboratory, the two still collaborate, especially on crafting durable magic items.

Hripsma's further research into integrating Hermetic magic and her native magical tradition has improved the training received by her apprentice. Nerses still must make patterned items to aid his concentration, but he is capable of casting spontaneous spells. This improvement in training has had some unexpected consequences, as Nerses suffers from the Weird Magic flaw (WGRE, p.62) and is a Slow Caster (ArM4, p.36).

Like his parens, Nerses is a skilled weaver, and has talents with embroidering and dying as well. In many ways, though, Nerses is still in Hripsma's shadow in the covenant, although he does not have any place better to go.

Nerses has an olive complexion, black hair, and dark eyes. He is clean-shaven, and favors simply embroidered robes, although the embroidered designs are similar to those used by Hripsma.

## Arcane traits

Hnchak covenant is located within a +5 Magic Aura. There are occasional minor fluctuations in the rating on Holy days and other auspicious occa-

sions, but not enough to significantly affect the average rating. The magi are able to harvest about 50 pawns of vis per year, in a variety of Arts. Because the magi are aging, they are slowly depleting their vis stocks, which currently stand at about 100 pawns. Hnchak has an extensive library, which reflects the scholarly interests of a few generations of magi, and is home to several scribes and scholars. The arcane and mundane libraries are discussed below.

## Arcane library

The arcane library at Hnchak is monstrous, containing 3000 levels of spells and 1170 points in arcane texts. This means that the library can be considered to have almost any basic spell available in ArM4, as well as almost any basic work on the Arts (summae with target 6 or less, libri quaestionum with target 4 or less, tractatus on most basic spells), plus commentaries on these works.

Some of the more recent additions to the library are commentaries on the better volumes as well as tractatus. Several of the works may be glossed as well, using the rules in WGRE (p.123). Glossed copies of the works are not usually made available to visiting magi, although sometimes it is the only version available.

Of course, certain plots may require the library to have odd gaps in its holdings, and not all volumes will be available to all visiting magi. Some example texts, which represent more recent interests, are presented below.

### *The Purging Flames*

by Ignis of Flambeau

Ignem (tractatus on *Arc of Fiery Ribbons* (CrIg 25), quality 4, 12 points)

Ignis uses *Arc of Fiery Ribbons* to illustrate various points about the Art of Ignem. The work also discusses practical considerations when using this spell.

### *Seeking Answers from the Stars*

by Vardan Naghash ex Miscellanea

Intéllego (liber quaestionum, target 8, quality 12, 20 points)

This volume discusses Intéllego as it relates to astronomy and related subjects. In this work, Vardan emphasizes how Intéllego can enhance interpreting astrological alignments.

### *About Seeking Answers from the Stars*

by Cicero Saturni of Bonisagus

Intéllego (commentary on liber quaestionum, target 8, quality 12, 20 points)



Cicero Saturni interprets Vardan's views on Intéllego for a more orthodox Hermetic audience. At several points, Cicero condemns the practice of using Intéllego to divine the future, although that topic was not mentioned in Vardan's work.

### *On Viewing the Heavens*

by Vardan Naghash ex Miscellanea

Intéllego (tractatus on *Summoning the Distant Image* (InIm 25), quality 6, 18 points)

Vardan here explains how use of the spell appears not to break the limit of the Lunar Sphere, and presents complicated metaphysics to support this observation.

### *Enigmatic Revelation*

by Suni of Criamon

Intéllego (liber quaestionum, target 6, quality 8, 14 points)

Suni explains how Intéllego may be used to reveal the Enigma in all things. Suni wanted to appear erudite, but unfortunately used tortured logic, obscure allusions, and verbose phrasing to make his points. (Readers of this book may be penalized by Suni's Enigmatic Wisdom score of 8, as per WGRE, p.136.)

### *About Enigmatic Revelation*

by Vardan Naghash ex Miscellanea

Intéllego (commentary on liber quaestionum, target 6, quality 8, 14 points)

Vardan attempts to elucidate his colleague's liber quaestionum, but the poor literary forms of the original limit his discussion. Vardan makes a valiant attempt though, and this work will be a welcome relief to students of Suni's work.

### *Enigmatic Revelation*

by Suni of Criamon, glossed by Occultes of Bonisagus

Intéllego (liber quaestionum, target 6, quality 16, 22 points)

Occultes of Bonisagus glossed Suni's work on Intéllego before leaving for Durenmar, and this gloss shows why he has been successful there. Occultes uses his margin notes to correct the major flaws of Suni's work. (The unglossed version, not this one, is made available to visitors.)

### *Assessing the Divine*

by Cicero Saturni of Bonisagus

Vim (tractatus on *Feeling the Font of Power* (InVi 5), quality 7, 21 points)

Cicero expounds on the magical theory that makes the Dominion-sensitive version of the spell work. He alludes to his work on reconciling the Dominion and Hermetic magic.

## Mundane library

The mundane library is almost as extensive as the arcane, containing 660 points in mundane books. Many of the mundane books are written in the Armenian (it grabar) script, although others are in Greek, Latin, and Arabic. By comparison, almost all of the arcane books are in Latin, although some may be in Armenian or Greek, depending on the author. In addition to the texts described below, the mundane library contains works on Scribe Latin, Scribe Armenian, Scribe Arabic, Philosophiae, Hermetic Law (the Levant), and Legend Lore.

### *History of the Armenians*

by Movses Khorenatsi

Armenian Lore (Authority, 50 points)

This comprehensive history of the Armenian people starts from the origins of the Armenians in the distant past, and follows through to the emergence of the independent, Christian Armenian kingdom in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The work takes up three separate volumes, and is written in Armenian. (This is a real book, and was probably written in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. However, the author claims to have written it in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century, so you could play that it had been lost and resurfaced some 400 years later.)

### *History*

by Agathangelos

Armenian Lore (summa level 3, quality 9, 36 points)

This epic history covers the stirring events surrounding the conversion to Christianity of Grigor the Illuminator and King Drtad, and the subsequent conversion of the Armenian people early in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. This work is written in Armenian. (Another real book, written in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century.)

### *History of Vardan and the Armenian War*

by Eghishe

Armenian Lore (summa level 4, quality 11, 46 points)

Another classic epic history, this one covering the period following the conversion to Christianity. This work is written in Armenian. (Another real book.)

### *On the Influence of the Church*

by Guillermo of Venice

Theology (Roman Catholicism) (summa level 2, quality 8, 28 points)

A book in a catechism format, which attempts to explain Roman Catholic dogma for relative novices. A chapter is devoted to the influence of the parish church on the community. This book is written in Latin.





## *On the Church*

by Grigor the Lesser

Theology (Armenian Orthodoxy) (liber quaestionum target 2, quality 11, 17 points)

This book explains some finer points of Armenian Orthodox theology for those with some familiarity with the subject. A large section answers questions related to the dedication of holy sites, and how that might influence the surrounding region. This book is written in Armenian.

## *On Observations*

by Tarik al-Malik

Artes Liberales (Astronomy) (tractatus on astronomy, quality 7, 21 points)

A work which expounds on astromonical and astrological practice. It also discusses how to interpret various alignments of astronomical features and so on. This book is written in Arabic.

## *On the Hermetic Theory of Magic*

by Bonisagus the Founder

Magic Theory (Authority, 50 points)

The definitive work on the Hermetic Theory of magic, written by the Founder himself.

## *About the Hermetic Theory of Magic*

by Cicero Saturni of Bonisagus

Magic Theory (summa level 5, quality 10, 50 points)

This summa is written as a commentary on Bonisagus. Cicero's analysis is cogent, although Durenmar has better in its library. In this work, Cicero outlines his ideas for reconciling Hermetic magic with the divine, but only in passing.

## *Reconciling with God*

by Cicero Saturni of Bonisagus

Magic Theory (tractatus on theological implications, quality 7, 21 points)

A more recent work by Cicero that discusses how magi should act before God. Here he clearly describes the aims of his research.

## *The Patterns of Magic*

by Hripsma Khorenatsi ex Miscellanea

Magic Theory (tractatus on hedge tradition, quality 5, 15 points)

In this work, Hripsma attempts to explain the interactions between her hedge magic tradition (which involves patterns, see above) and Hermetic magic. A very idiosyncratic work, which reflects her training.

## *About the Patterns of Magic*

by Cicero Saturni of Bonisagus

Magic Theory (commentary on tractatus, quality 5, 15 points)

Cicero recasts Hripsma's explanations from the Hermetic point of view, which subordinates her traditional magic system to Hermetic magic.

# Covenfolk

## Specialists

The following section describes some of the more important specialists who live at the covenant. The list is not comprehensive, and other should be added as needed. Hnchak has roughly a dozen more specialists, including several scribes.

## Smbat Narekatsi the autocrat

**Age:** 37

**Size:** 0

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +1, Str -1, Stm -1, Pre +2, Com +2, Dex 0, Qik -1

**Virtues and Flaws:** Patron (Hnchak covenant) +2, Clear Thinker +1, Educated +1, Petty Merchant +1, Well-Traveled +1, Noncombatant -3, Curse of Venus -2, Obligation (to Hnchak) -1

**Personality Traits:** Leader +3, Ambitious +2

**Abilities:** Armenia Lore 3, Artes Liberales 2, Awareness 1, Bargain 4, Charm 2, Concentration 1, Etiquette 3, Folk Ken 3, Leadership 4, Order of Hermes Lore 2, Ride 1, Scribe Arabic 1, Scribe Armenian 2, Scribe Greek 3, Scribe Latin 3, Speak Arabic 1, Speak Armenian 5, Speak Greek 2, Speak Latin 4, Speak Persian 1

**Note:** This version of Smbat presents him as a starting character. He could easily have more experience as an NPC, in which case he should also speak additional languages, such as Aramaic, Kurdish, or even French.

Smbat has been autocrat for several years now, and is quite effective in his job. He is torn between promoting the mundane power of the covenant, and maintaining the low profile that the magi prefer. As the magi have become more inwardly focused, they have delegated almost all of the responsibility for day-to-day affairs to Smbat.

He was responsible for negotiating the good terms that the covenant enjoys with Lord Gevorg, and makes sure that Gevorg does not suspect the true nature of the covenant. Before taking on the job of autocrat, Smbat led the trading missions for the covenant, and he is particularly worried about the depletion of the covenant's stores. He has managed to accumulate some wealth through personal trades, and feels that he may need to spend some of it to prevent famine at the covenant should the it suffer another bad year.



Smbat is a good-looking man. His hair is thick and full, and his complexion has always been reasonably fair. He has begun to spread a little around the middle as he approaches middle age. He dresses well, although not lavishly, and tends to favor western styles. Around the covenant, he tends to wear items made from silk, or with silken embellishments.

### Captain Drtdad

The garrison captain is Drtdad, a solid man who is well-suited to his job. He sees his work as making sure that the garrison is in the best fighting shape it can be. Although the covenant has not been assaulted during Drtdad's tenure, his predecessor as captain inculcated a drive to keep the covenant's defenses ever at the ready.

Drtdad is particularly worried about the Seljuk Turks, who have pushed through the area over the last several decades. He is not sure what to make of rumors that there are other forces massing in the east and north who are also ready to overrun the region as the Seljuks did, but if he has anything to do with it, the grogs will be ready for whatever happens. Drtdad would also like a dedicated armorer to be recruited to the covenant, but Smbat Narekatsi feels that other tasks, such as stabilizing the food supplies, are more important.

Drtdad is an athletic man, who looks like a warrior. He has small scars on his hands and arms from training. He has a suit of chain mail in a Persian fashion. His helmet has a plume as a mark of office, and he wears a surcoat marked with a bell and shield to indicate his membership in the elite Hnchak guards.

### Movses the potter

Movses is an old man, and a skilled potter. His workplace is upriver from the smithy and the tannery. The clay he works needs to be brought in from the surrounding area, although in a pinch he could use raw clay from the riverbank near the covenant.

Movses generally uses very simple decorative patterns on his works. If the magi request a special

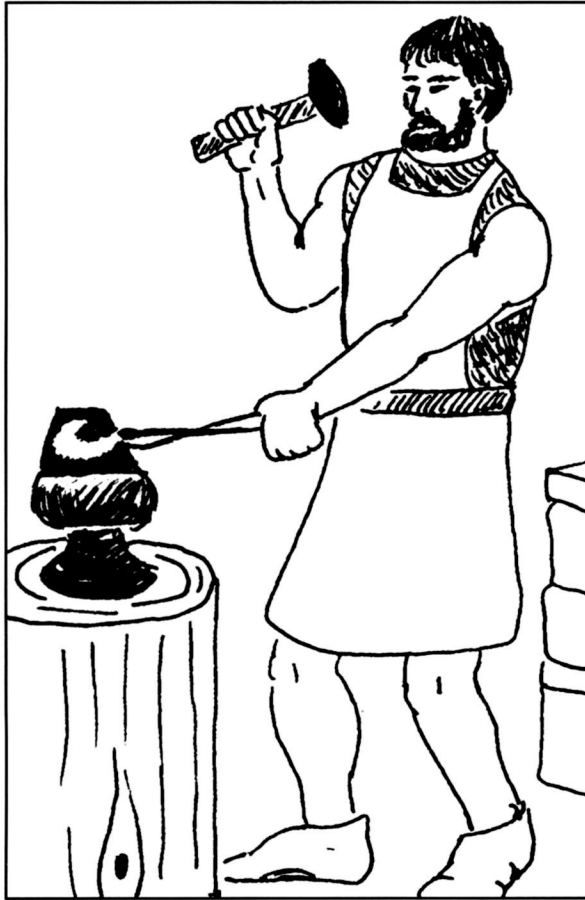
design or image, though, he will apply that before firing the work. He is able to create quite complicated pieces to order, and his work is featured in the covenant's laboratories. Movses is a widower, and lives alone in a living quarters attached to his workplace.

### Tigran the blacksmith

Tigran is a powerful, young man, well suited to being a blacksmith. He is responsible for making and maintaining the iron implements used at the covenant. He is a competent smith, although very complicated or intricate jobs are beyond him. Also, he handles larger

jobs in other metals, although again, he has neither the tools nor the skill to handle intricate work, such as laboratory pieces.

Tigran is married, and has begun training his young son as a smith as well. Mostly this involves having the boy bring fresh water and run the bellows, but the lad enjoys working with his father.



Tigran the blacksmith

### Nishan the tanner.

Nishan is a middle-aged man, and a competent tanner. Nishan has dark brown hair which is only beginning to gray, although it is thinning on top. Tanning is a tough, smelly job, and unfortunately, Nishan tends to carry the aroma of his work with him. His hands are toughened from his labor. He is a quiet man, conversing with those who stop by, but not socializing much.

Nishan is usually busy preparing hides, but he will take on leatherworking projects as well.

Nishan lives close by his work area, although no one likes being too close to the tannery. In addition to his older brother Mashtots (see below), Nishan's wife and two children reside at the covenant.

### Mashtots the percemenarius

Mashtots is Nishan's older brother, and convinced Nishan and his family to move to the covenant when he and his family did. Mashtots' skills are particularly valued at the covenant, for he turns treated hides into parchment. Although the magi are often too wrapped up in their own affairs to truly appreci-





ate Mashtots' work, Smbat the autocrat makes sure that Mashtots is kept happy.

Mashtots, his wife, and four children live in a larger cottage near the Great Hall. He works with Nishan in the tannery to prepare the hides, although he does bindery work in his cottage. Mashtots' wife, Eleanor, helps with the binding work, mostly the sewing work.

Mashtots looks like his brother, although he wears a neatly trimmed beard. He is even going bald in the same way, and is only a little more gray. He wears nicer clothing when he isn't working at the tannery, and he and his wife have several finer silken items.

## Scholars

There are currently four scholars in residence at Hnchak covenant. Grigor and Davit are both Armenian Orthodox priests who were invited to study by Cicero Saturni. They are studying works on theology, and preparing commentaries on them. Grigor has been to Hnchak covenant before.

Malik is a Sufi poet who is being supported by Suni of Criamon. Suni hopes to teach Malik a little of Enigmatic Wisdom, and have Malik interpret that through his poetry.

Iassonas is a Roman Catholic monk who has been at Hnchak covenant for only a short time. He is suspicious of the magi's intentions, especially Cicero Saturni, and fears that the magi may be preparing to promote the overthrow of the Church in some fashion. As one of the few Catholics in the covenant, much less the region, he feels very isolated.

## Grogs

The defences of the covenant are manned by a garrison of roughly 150 footmen. These grogs are divided into four parts. The most elite troops are the Hnchak guards, who are entrusted with guarding the magi personally. This unit of 20 includes the garrison captain, and they wear livery with badges in the form of a bell and shield on them. The remaining 130 troops are split into three roughly equal parts. A turb sergeant commands each unit of 40 men or so. The livery for each unit has a large bell badge, with units distinguished by color.

The garrison captains over the years have tried to ensure that the grogs' arms are standardized, at least within units, but the focus is more on keeping their arms and armor in good shape.

The current captain, Drtad, is obsessed with drilling and training the men.

The grogs are also used as the primary labor force at the covenant. Thus, many are involved in farming work, particularly during planting and harvest times, but they are also used to maintain the covenant's buildings and defences. Drtad has recently set the troops to restoring the ditch by the walls, but little progress has been made so far.

The other residents at the covenant are mostly the families of the grogs and specialists. Most of the rest in the covenant are concerned with producing food.

Wheat and millet are the staple crops for the covenant, but it also grows olives, pistachios, apricots, grapes, pomegranates, and figs. The crops require irrigation using the water from the river because of the limited rainfall. Most of the fruits are dried for storage, although the grapes are made into mediocre wines.

Sheep herds are maintained for meat, milk, wool, and skins. A small number of goats are also kept, primarily for their milk. Most of the milk is converted into yogurt or cheese, since they keep longer. The covenant thins its herds in the fall, since winter pasturage and

fodder are limited. The river also provides some fish. The meat and fish are preserved for storage.

## Saga notes

You are welcome to adapt this covenant to be the setting for your own saga. Although the covenant as written is currently full (with eight magi), you can create some room for magi by omitting Thermotseos of Flambeau and by making Nerses an apprentice (rather than a magus). Also feel free to add more sancta as appropriate. There should be plenty of room for you to introduce your own companions.

The names used for most of the characters appearing at Hnchak covenant are typical Armenian names. Many are of biblical origin (Movses, Davit), while others predate the conversion to Christianity (Tigran, Drtad). Last names ending in -atsi or -etsi indicate that the person is from the town mentioned. For example, Movses Khorenatsi is Anglicized as Moses of Khoren. The stereotypical Armenian surnames ending in -ian or -yan (meaning "son of" or "of the family of") seem not to be as common in the ArM period, and so are not used much here, although you are welcome to do so. ☒





historia gratia historiae

# Calenture

## in the Time of Ars Magica

### A Survey of 13th Century Views of Health

by Adam Bank

*"Since, then, we have talked sufficient nonsense—not willingly, but because we were forced, as the proverb says, 'to behave madly among madmen'—let us return again to the subject of urinary secretion."*

—Galen, *On the Natural Faculties*, I 14-15.

Many written sources of medieval medical wisdom survived to be scrutinized by 20th century eyes. Conversely, most folk practices, never originally transcribed, became lost or distorted by the early folklorists who recorded them. This article provides an introductory survey of in-period materials on "healthy living" that probably influenced the daily lives of nobility, gentry, and urban commoners alike during the span of a typical Ars Magica Saga.

#### Essential Framework: Galen's Six Unnaturals

Galen (c. 130 – 200 AD), physician to Emperors and one of the progenitors of medical science, wrote over 500 treatises on health, biology, and disease, although less than one-fifth of his corpus survives today. Throughout the medieval period, writers adopted, imitated, mutated, and occasionally mutilated Galen's theories on maintaining human health. In his *Tacuinum Sanitatis*, Galen describes the requirements for living well and daily concerns for the maintenance of health and happiness.

*The Isagoge* by Iohannitius, a Galenist work widely circulated during the 12th and 13th centuries, split the art of medicine into three distinct subjects: the natural, the contranatural, and the nonnatural. "Naturals," such as elements, humours, qualities, and complexions, governed the makeup of living things and the activities essential to life, and lie beyond the scope of this article. "Contranaturals," those things adverse to life, are discussed in the next section.

"Nonnaturals," on the other hand, were neither inimical nor essential to life. Instead, nonnaturals determined health or illness, depending on their use or abuse. The regulation of nonnaturals insured a proper standard of health. The control of naturals and the treatment contranaturals required the care of an expert physician, while patients could see to nonnaturals themselves on a daily basis.

A nonnatural influence belonged to one of six categories: (1) air (environment), (2) physical motion and rest, (3) food and drink, (4) sleep and wakefulness, (5) the elimination and retention of bodily humours (including sexuality), and (6) moods (joy, anger, fear, and distress). "The secret of the preservation of health," according to the Rouen translation of the *Tacuinum*, "will be in the proper balance of all these elements, since it is the disturbance of this balance that causes the illnesses which the glorious and most exalted God permits."

#### The Causes of Disease: An Anglo-Saxon View

The famous Bald's *Leechbook* and the *Lacnunga* collected manuscript (both c. 1000 AD) say much on the sources of disease. The *Peri didaxeon* (a 13th Century manuscript in late Old English), while more Galenist in its analysis of medicine, mentions the causes of disease only incidentally. The *Leechbook*, the *Lacnunga* compilation, and the *Peri didaxeon* combine to present a suitable cross-section of the Western European views of disease causation.

The overabundance of bodily fluids appears in all three texts as a source of disease, a notion that dominated medicine for centuries. The *Leechbook* speaks of "yfle waeton," literally "wet things," typically translated as "evil humours." The *Peri didaxeon*, however, better echoes the "four humours" theory of classic Galenism: "There are four humours in the human body: that is the humours in the head [phlegm], and the blood in the breast, and the rough bile in the intestines [choler], and the black bile within the gall bladder [melancholy]."

In modern times, this notion reverses. An infection or allergic reaction causes the eyes to water, the skin to sweat, the nose to run, or the bowels to churn. Medieval theorists, without the benefit of vivisectional investigation, relied instead on the logical extension of external observations. Under the "wet things" theory, the swelling up of one fluid or another causes the ailment, rather than presenting a symptom. Thus, balancing the "wet things" and other factors within the body, became the goal





of most pre-modern medical and dietetic practices, and survives today as the core element of ironically-labeled “non-traditional” medicine.

Other sources of diseases attacked from without, rather than disturbing the balance from within. Many ailments came from an invasion of “the worm.” Most macroscopic parasites of the human body at least resemble worms. Intestinal worms of a disturbing variety thrive in unhygienic conditions (from tape worms over 12 feet long to tiny pinworms no longer than an inch, but thicker than spaghetti). The blowfly lays eggs in open sores of many mammalian species. The *Leechbook* blames most visible infections on worms, including those where no macroscopic worm is apparent, such as toothaches.

“Flying poisons” posed another external threat. The phrase “ill wind,” now metaphorical, began with literal and lethal significance. The notion of seasonal, pestilence-bringing winds exists in cultures throughout the world. The *Leechbook* gives specific dates when “poisonous things are flying” and what to do (or not to do) to avoid them. The majority modern view equates flying poisons to viral epidemics, passing from one person to another seemingly on the wind. At least one translator, however, suggests that the *Leechbook’s* “flying poisons” specifically refer to bacterial diseases.

Supernatural causes, of course, also abound. The “devil-sick” lose control of their bodies or minds. Fairies, called “elves,” “dwarves,” “hags,” and even “old gods” also bring disease. The infamous “elf-shot” inflicts both humans and animals with severe swelling and lesions. The symptoms of “elf-hiccup” resemble chronic liver disease. Generally, chronic, physically debilitating, mentally enfeebling, or suddenly appearing illnesses result from devilish meddling.

## Balneology: The Therapeutic Baths of Pozzuoli

Although early folklorists alleged that sausages made from human excrement were eaten in several Western European countries to ward off epilepsy and mental disability, medieval medicine universally recognized the obvious connection between filth and disease. At the turn of the 13th century, Western Europe had yet to reach a population density that required organized, public sanitation to fend off epidemics.

Bathing, a central activity of Roman social life, remained an important facet of healthy living in

medieval Europe, as evidenced by the remarkable popularity of an otherwise unremarkable poem, “The Baths of Pozzuoli.” Written sometime between 1211 and 1220 AD, dedicated to Frederick II of the Holy Roman Empire, the Latin poem describes the 35 baths of Pozzuoli, a resort town some 4 miles west of Naples. The poem, soon translated into French and Italian, became one of the most illuminated texts of secular interest for the next three centuries. The twenty copies extant today contain approximately three hundred illustrations.

The poem describes the therapeutic properties of the baths, attesting to their ability to cure dozens of ailments, both physical and mental. The baths drew wealthy visitors from the Mediterranean and central Europe throughout the Middle Ages. Gervase of Tilbury, who visited Naples in 1190, reported to Emperor Henry VI that the classical Virgil built the baths himself. Emperor Frederick visited the baths to cure an illness in 1227 AD. At the turn of the 14th century, Charles II founded a hospital in the region.

In addition to recommending pilgrimages to spas, 13th century physicians also prescribed bathing at home (typically with basins, rather than full immersion). “Pleasantly warm” water helped open the pores and reduce fevers. Washing hands in rainwater collected from “good lands” reduced hand pains. Bathing in non-stagnant salt water “freed the body.” Bathing, however, was contraindicated for sore throat, itching, severe illness, and intestinal irregularity. These dangers could be cor-

rected by adding various elements to the bath water, such as sweet-water, rose water, clay, and ice.

The primary goals of bathing, therefore, did not include cleanliness. Balneologists, of course, recognized the dangers of using contaminated water. Galenists recommended bathing for direct medicinal benefits, while promotion of hygiene became a secondary benefit.

## Living Well: From the regimen sanitatis to publica utilitas

The “scholastic tradition” of medicine dominated the 13th century. The archetypical scholastic physician, Arnold of Villanova (ob. 1311 AD), inventor of the vegetable tincture and the aqua vitae (or in modern usage, brandy), practiced medicine in the mid-to-late 1200s. The scholastics, unflappable in their devotion to the classic authorities, combined the Galenist’s six unnaturals with





Aristotle's doctrine of qualities (hot, cold, dry, and moist). This elaboration provided a sophisticated analytical framework for the determination of the medical value of specific activities and substances.

Logical conclusions of analogy, not empirical observation, allowed medieval physicians to use their Galenist/Aristotelean framework to develop medical theories. Arnald of Villanova (ob. 1311 AD), for example, analogized the chambers of the heart to a baker's oven to establish the mechanics of fever. This same technique applied to the determination of diet, the greatest source of energy. Thus, physicians used natural philosophy, analogy, and syllogism not only to cure the sick but also to devise regimens of health.

The personal attention of a physician, however, required wealth and status. Not incidentally, medicine and health began as fundamentally private and personal aspects of life during most of the 13th century. Because the six unnaturals varied from person to person and place to place, a regimen of health had to be tailored to individual patients and locales. Thus, a wealthy patient contracted with physicians to write a medical text, called a regimen sanitatis (plural regimina), applicable specifically to the patient. Maimonides' famous regimen, for example, was written specifically for al-Adil, sultan of Egypt, son of Saladin himself.

By the end of the 13th century, however, a revolution brewed, driven by political necessity and personal interests. Designing and moderating a diet took time, and the effects of diets were long-term. Most patients preferred, and could better afford, sick-visits rather than the commission of regimina. "Nowadays," commented Barnard de Gordon (circa 1307-1308), "physicians do not take care to know the regimen sanitatis in their daily practice, because in their opinion there is no profit in it. On the other hand, they are very concerned about curing diseases, especially fevers."

The 13th century also saw the proliferation of urbanization, and with it, the desperate need for public sanitation. Diseases in epidemic proportions in medieval towns included leprosy, bubonic plague, smallpox, tuberculosis, scabies, erysipelas, anthrax, trachoma, and dancing mania. In response, the ideology of health changed by the beginning of the 14th century.

This change is best reflected by the mutation of regimina from personal diet books of the wealthy into a popular literary genre. At first, regimina designed for individuals were copied, translated, and

distributed as source texts for other physicians working in the same geographical area in which the patient lived. The regimen of Arnald of Villanova, for example, was translated into Hebrew for the benefit of Jewish doctors who had Christian patients in Languedoc and the Mediterranean.

By the end of the 14th century, however, regimina had evolved into a widely proliferated corpus on the scientific study of foodstuffs. The individualized recommendations of traditional regimens transformed into abstract treatises. Some regimina were simply distributed "as-is" to the general public. Arnald's regimen appeared in the personal libraries of lay merchants, professionals, and church members.

This revolution affected Jewish and Islamic medicine as well as Christian. Arabic writings "On Foodstuffs" appear in the kingdom of Granada. Abu Bakr Abd al-Aziz al-Arbuli of Almeira explained: "foodstuffs are the principle cause of health, since if they are employed as they should be, a man's health is maintained and the damage that bodies may have suffered is repaired." In the first third of the 14th century, the *Book of Regal Castilian Medicine*, a Toledan Jewish text, echoes this view.

Healthy living, the luxury of the wealthy, became publica utilitas, a public good. The Order of the Holy Ghost, operating over a thousand establishments by the middle of the 13th century, founded hospitals that still exist today. In the 1230s, Frederick II introduced sanitary regulations and the licensing of doctors, requiring physicians to take a curriculum-based 9-year course culminating in a mandatory state exam. Municipalities throughout Europe began to control the handling and distribution of foods, the cleaning of streets, the removal of garbage, and even pollution nuisance disputes. With the city came the plague, and with the plague came the sanitation department.



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## More on Exceptional Abilities

by Mark Shirley

The purpose of this column is to explain in more detail the Exceptional Talents described in *Ars Magica* fourth edition. Each Ability begins with the description found in the rules (occasionally with minor modifications), and then expands on that brief description.

These abilities can be used to make minor hedge wizards or supplement the powers of more powerful magicians. Storyguides might wish to exercise caution when allowing characters, especially Magi, to take these abilities. For the most part, they are incompatible with Hermetic magic.

This issue the focus is on...

### Second Sight

This Talent overlaps somewhat with some of the other Exceptional Talents, such as Faerie Sight, Magic Sensitivity, and Sense Holiness / Unholiness. Like them, it is always active, but the character can try

to concentrate on his abilities to try and pick up anything that might have escaped his notice. The storyguide should make Second Sight rolls for the character, for they should not know whether the roll has failed or whether there is genuinely nothing to sense. Despite its name, this ability is not only restricted to sight—a successful roll might mean that one could

hear the voice of a nature spirit, or feel the caresses of a ghostly lover. It is up to the spirit (and thus the storyguide) to how a successful roll manifests itself.

This ability is geared specifically to see the invisible world. The more powerful that a spirit is, the more real it seems to a person with the Talent of Second Sight, but powerful beings are not necessarily easier to see. Thus a person with this talent might converse with a ghost, unaware of the nature of the spirit of the dead until it becomes obvious that other people cannot see what they can.

Different types of spirits are more difficult to see. The closer that a spirit is tied to the material world, the lower the ease factor. Thus ghosts are the easiest to spot—they were once living, and have decomposing bodies in the corporeal world. Faeries, tied closely to the world, are also quite easy to spot. This assumes that the faerie is sneaking around invisibly. If they are visible but covered in a glamour, they can still be detected as fae, but without actually piercing the glamour itself. Elemental spirits (including spirits of nature), while connected to the physical world, are creatures made entirely of spirit-stuff, and thus are difficult to see. Finally, celestial beings such as angels and demons can be seen, but with some

difficulty. Demons can be seen for what they are even if they are possessing someone, or in a corporeal body.

Note that Second Sight does not give the character the ability to identify the nature of a spiritual being, just the ability to see them. Knowledges such as Legend Lore, Faerie Lore and Occult Lore are needed to tell different spiritual beings apart.

This ability can be used to look into *regiones*. It can work with equal facility for all types or *regio*—Magical, Faerie, Divine or Infernal—as other levels of a *regio* are effectively invisible places, no matter what their affinity. However, those with Second Sight find it more difficult to see other layers of *regiones* than do those with other Exceptional Talents (note that this ruling is different from that on p.245 of *Ars Magica* Fourth Edition).

The roll for all uses of Second Sight is Perception + Second Sight, and is often made on a stress die, especially if the character is in a Supernatural Aura. However, those that have this Talent are not tied strong enough to any particular Supernatural Realm to gain a bonus from the Aura score to their roll. The ease factors are given in the table below:

| Type of Spirit                       | Roll required                                    |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Ghost-Spirit of the Dead             | 9+                                               |
| Animal Spirit                        | 10+                                              |
| Faerie                               | 10+                                              |
| Elemental Spirit or Spirit of Nature | 12+                                              |
| Angel or Demon                       | 14+                                              |
| Regio boundry                        | 8+(2x difference between current and next layer) |

#### Example

Jeanine (Per +0, Second Sight 3) was born at midnight on All Hallow's Eves, and it has always been said about her that she straddled both the worlds of the living and the dead. As a child she had always watched things that no-one else could see. One night she hears the voice of her mother, who had died giving birth to her. (The storyguide rolls for Jeanine's player, getting a 6, which when added to her Perception and her Second Sight, including her Specialty for ghosts, comes to a total of 10, enough to sense the presence of a ghost.

*With her mother calling to her, Jeanine follows the voice to the old graveyard. This place is a magical regio, with the upper layers being occupied by the spirits of the dead. Looking around for whoever it was that called her name, the storyguide makes a roll to see if she slips into the upper layer of the regio. This layer has an Aura of 1, the other has an Aura of 3. The roll is therefore made against an ease factor of 8 (base) + 4 (2x difference between the two levels) for a total of 12. Jeanine rolls a 5 on the stress die, which modified by her Perception (+0) and Second Sight (3, + 1 for her specialty) is a total of 9. Jeanine can hear her mother calling for her, but cannot find her, despite searching the whole graveyard.*

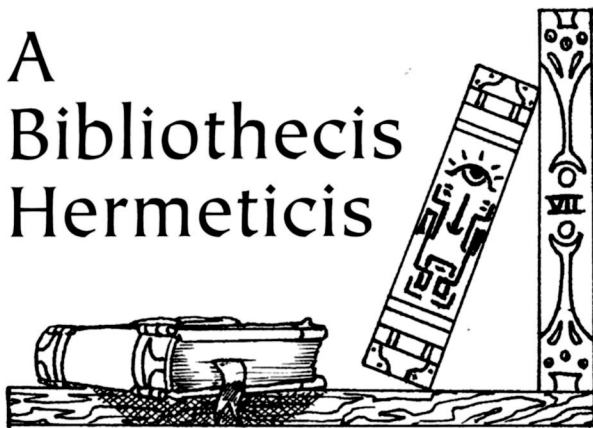
#### Second Sight (+1 General Virtue):

You are able to see ghosts, demons and other invisible spirits. A roll of 9+ on Second Sight + Perception is usually successful, but your target may be higher or lower at the storyguide's discretion. Choosing this virtue confers the Talent of Second Sight 1 which can be improved as other Talents.

Specialties: ghosts, demons, faeries



# A Bibliothecis Hermeticis



Contributed by Jerome Darmont (JD), Timothy Ferguson (TF), and Kyle Schirmer (KS)

The rules for library points are found on p.210 of the *Ars Magica 4th Edition*, and in the *Wizard's Grimoire Revised Edition* p.124 and are summarized here.

|                       |                                                     |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Libri quæstionum      | target + Quality                                    |
| Summæ                 | (Quality + level) x 2                               |
| Tractatus             | Quality x 3                                         |
| Authorities           | 50 points                                           |
| Commentaries          |                                                     |
| Summa                 | Quality x 3                                         |
| Libri quæstionum      | Target of commented text<br>+ Quality of commentary |
| Tractatus (Art)       | Magnitude of Spell                                  |
| Tractatus (Knowledge) | Quality x 3                                         |

Multiply the targets of mundane books by three when determining their cost. For the purposes of multisubject books, calculate the points for each subject as if it were a separate book and then total them. You may wish to subtract some amount as only one person may use such a book at a time. Or devise a system that better suits your saga.



## Arcane Communication

by Donicus filius Archidates of Mercere, Covenant of the Compass Card, Tribunal of the Levant

**Summæ:** Intéllego 8, Creo 8, Mentem 10.  
**Quality 9, 106 points**

This summa is structured into four tomes bound in fine leather. It is Donicus' chef d'oeuvre, the great achievement of the first part of his life, and has earned him a fair reputation in his home Tribunal and beyond.

Each of the first three tomes is dedicated to the study of one Art (Intéllego, Creo, and

Mentem) and the last tome is a brilliant synthesis bringing in two spells: *Sharing the Thoughts* and *Sharing the Distant Thoughts*.

### *Sharing the Distant Thoughts* (InMe/Cr 50)

**R:** Arcane Connection, **D:** Concentration, **T:** Individual  
**Spell focus:** An iris flower (+2)

This spell helps the caster communicate by thoughts with anyone he possesses an arcane connection to. The mental conversation lasts until the caster ceases concentrating, but the target may choose not to answer. If the target knows the caster, The target can recognize the caster's voice.

*Sharing the Thoughts* is an older and less powerful version of this spell (Level 35, Range: Near), which served Donicus as a basis for the mightier version.

Level rationale:

- Spell based on Posing the Silent Question (InMe 20)
- Creo requisite added to allow formulated speech (which is a CrMe 5 effect)
- Range raised from Eye/Sight to Arcane Connection (+25)
- Duration raised from Momentary to Concentration (+5) (JD)



## An Introspective View on the Nature of Magic VOL. 1-3

by Frederick of Bonisagus

**Summæ:** Vim 17, **Quality 9, 52 points**

Considered one of the authoritative works on the subject of Vim. The three volumes are bound in black leather with the heading in silver. The edges and corners are reinforced and an iron buckle seals each book. The pages are pearly grey with pictures enchanted to change to what the reader is currently reading. As a result of one of the author's twilight experiences he oozes raw magic and left some residue on the books. In the dark one can see a silver aura from certain angles. (KS)



## The Counterclaim of Theodemos

by Theodemos of Tremere

**Tractatus:** Order of Hermes Lore and Hermetic Law, **Quality 12. 108 points**





A brief work circulated in the recent past in which a magus, Theodemos, claims to have been the author of a book attributed to the more famous Dewicarta. This succinct pamphlet outlines Theodemos's claim to authorship, provides textual evidence, and elaborates a primitive Hermetic theory of intellectual property, based on the untested and possibly specious premise that recognition leads to rewards which allow the easier practice of magic. Conversely, claims the author, failure of recognition inhibits the gathering of such rewards, which in turn retards the development of magical skills. Theodemos being a Tytalus, this work may have been penned specifically to inflame divisions within the Quaesitores. (TF) ❏

## Famæ Fabulæque



by John Kasab

This feature is designed to provide some story seeds that can provide a diversion, a short storyline, or even a major saga thread. Storyguides should feel constrained only by their imagination. This issue's Famæ Fabulæque deals with Hnchak covenant and surroundings.

You live near to here, is that right? You may be interested in my tale, then. I have recently arrived from the east, bearing with me these goods. (You like them, yes? We will make a deal later.)

Yes, so, we were traveling through the parts to the east. We noticed that one of the villages we normally stop by had been badly damaged. It is maybe two, three weeks away from here. Well, they have always been very hospitable, and I wondered who would be so uncivil as to burn the houses of peasants? So, we entered the village, as is our custom, and asked the people there what had befallen them.

They said, "Several wild men on fast horses rode through here not three days ago. They took what they could, and tried to burn the rest." And, truly, much of their village had

been burned. They were finally getting most of their sheep returned to their pens, and had begun repairing their houses. Fortunately, it is not too cold to sleep without shelter, but they have work to do if they are to be ready by winter.

**Story hooks:** Who are these strangers? Are they raiding, or are they intent on conquest like the Turks? What threat do they pose to the covenant?



The characters receive the following:

... So I turn to the matter at hand. I have heard of a text, known as [it The Mysteries of Power], which would be of great use to me in my studies. My sources are not clear on exactly what this text covers, but my best guess is that it is a work on the Art of Vim. If the author is who I believe it to be, this should be an excellent work. However, this author often confuses learned writing with overblown prose, and my previous experience is that glossators are able to clarify the meaning quite well. Thus, you must try to find a glossed copy of the text.

My sources tell me that the library at Hnchak covenant would be likely to have such a copy. If you were able to copy their manuscript, and send that copy to me, I would be in your debt. You should contact Cicero Saturni of Bonisagus to receive an invitation to study in their library. I have found him most amenable to such requests in the past.

**Story hooks:** Can the characters get access to the glossed version of the text? What will they have to provide in return to the covenant?



So, there I was, in Jerusalem, ready to return from my pilgrimage, when who do I run into but my colleague Gignere. He's that Verditius that came through here on his way to the Levant, you remember. Gangly fellow, built like a beanpole. Anyway, he says that he's at this covenant up in the mountains, Hun-shack or something, and there's this hedge wizard who makes magic using rugs or something. Sounds pretty far-out to me, but this covenant is really on the fringe anyway, from what I hear.

**Story hooks:** Perhaps the characters need a high-quality knotted carpet or flat-weave rug for use in a project. Or, perhaps the characters are interested in learning more about this hedge magic tradition. Or, perhaps they are just interested in having a decorative item for their covenant that has subtle magical overtones to it. ❏





## Council Passerum

Europe circa AD 1200, the setting is a covenant in the fullness of its years, a place of wondrous and terrible power.... The site of many tribunals, Vespasian's Rest lies in the Tribunal of the Greater Alps and its masters have agreed to answer the inquiries of those who would make them.

"Obviously the masters of Vespasian's Rest have finally and completely lost their wits," thinks Gertrude. "What else could it be? For seasons I have studied and refined my scribing for the privilege of serving the council, and now, in what should be my finest moment, this!"

"Are you ready?" The question startles Gertrude back to the moment at hand, the humiliation.

"This has to be some sort of evil humor," mumbles the scribe.

"So you find me humorous, do you?" asks the rodent climbing about the table.

"No, I don't find *you* humorous," snaps Gertrude before realizing her mistake. "Are you one of the masters disguised in the form of a beast?"

The bristle-tailed speaker asks, "Would that help you to do what you have been trained to do?"

"Er... well, yes. Is that it? Are you a visiting maga?"

"All right, yes, you have discovered my secret. I am a powerful maga practicing her ability to take this shape," comments the gray-haired rat with a strangely humorous tone.

"Can we get on with this now?"

"Yes, forgive me, mistress, I am ready," taking quill into hand. "At your leisure, mistress."

"Good, I think I will answer this one. It more or less seems a topic I can bite into, and since everyone is busy with more pressing matters, I am pleased to assist! 'How does one deal with keeping Mythic beasts at bay?' Er, well, not that one. Where did it go? Sometimes I wish I had thumbs—damnable half-baked familiar rituals—let me see.... 'Creating wealth,' 'Dealing with vulgar parentes,' 'Apprentice rights and privileges.' Ah, here. Covenfolk.

"Sodalis, your question involving your efforts to, as you put it, 'deal with the unruly members of your covenant's covenfolk' is an interesting one to which I offer the following story:

"When I was young, I was curious about something I spied down the way. I snuck off while my dam was suckling my more hungry littermates. They were always scrabbling for more, pushing and clawing for whatever it was that they wanted. Of course, I was like that too, so I guess I can't complain, though there was a couple of larger males that

would always get.... Ooh, look! Crumbs! You did not tell me you eat on this table."

Gertrude looks on, the room silent except for the quiet munching of crumbs and the scratching for more.

"Mmrph, anyway, when she found me missing, she promptly ran after me. I did not know she had found me until she bit into my nape and whipped me about. Her growl brooked no argument, let me tell you. Yes, a growl, not a squeak like you might expect. A deep, angry growl that told us to do as she wished. There was no debate from me. I was never one to argue too much. I left that for my brothers. They argued over everything....

"Well, anyway, she dragged me back to the nest by the nape of the neck. I got the scolding of my young life. After that, all my brothers and sisters knew that leaving the nest without our dam's permission was forbidden. I guess that is a lesson I never learned, heh. None of her brood ever really listened to her. I know now that it is a rat's essential nature to take what it wants, when it wants it. That is just how it is.

"So, to answer your question, I suggest that you find these recalcitrant covenfolk and drag them back to their place. The others will see that you know better than they do and will learn better by it. Since you are a maga, you are in charge. Show it.

"The covenfolk need you. You are the providers for the litter, er, covenant. You are its *raison d'être*. They exist for you and you for them. Covenfolk are a lot like rats actually, though, rats do serve a noble purpose. Why are people afraid of us? It is not like we eat people. Anyway, covenfolk have no place to go except to the covenant. When the folk get uppity, it is because they need their dam to show them the proper way of things. Likewise, it is the responsibility of the magi to care for the folk at the covenant. Without the magi, the covenant would die, just like a litter whose mother left it to fend for itself."

The rodent scrabbles around in the papers again. "Well, that





was simple enough. I think I will try another. I just saw one. Ah yes, here it is. 'Kind sodales at the great Covenant of Vespasian's Rest. I am a magus Ex Miscellanea and am quite perturbed at the Order's treatment of our lesser, so-called Hedge Wizard, brethren. Why do we force them to 'join or die?' Most are harmless and aren't hurting anyone.'

"From what I've heard from magi here and at that other big covenant, it seems this is the same problem as with the covenfolk. The Order is the dam and the 'hedge wizards' are the litter. When a mother rat comes across a baby rat it does not know, or one she does not want, she will eat it. Many animals will reject their young for many reasons. The young one may be diseased, a misfit, weak, or just a runt. The mother may not have enough food for it and needs to make a bitter choice: How many will starve—just this one or the whole litter? In order to not get eaten, the 'hedge wizards' need to belong to the pack, or not get noticed by the mother rat."

The shadow moves to the edge of the table and watches the scribe do her work. As Gertrude completes her task, she is startled to see the rat staring at her with a gleam in her black eyes.

"Now, go get your dam some cheese."

Gertrude quickly responds, "Y-yes, mistress," as she fearfully exits the council chamber in search of the kitchens leaving the familiar-friend of Hélène of Mercere to quietly reflect on the rumors this session would be responsible for.

## Dealing with Covenfolk

There are no specific rules for dealing with covenfolk. Nowhere does it say, do 'X to achieve Y'. Generally it's a roleplaying exercise. Concepts of equality, fair play, love, duty, station, et al are viewed differently by the peoples within the game's setting. While troupes should feel free to ignore thirteenth century beliefs and concepts, sometimes roleplaying situations that would be intolerable today (within

reason) can be instructive and entertaining. If your storyguide and troupe desires a turb that has equality with the magi, then by all means do so. But if a more accurate view is desired, you must often times seek motives and rationale contrary to modern thinking.

It is assumed that young covenants will contain some of the outcasts of the area, the detritus of society—they have nowhere else to go and the covenant needs bodies to perform many functions. As the covenant matures, its servants will tend to be replaced by more moderate and acclimated sorts.

Until that time, however, there is no guarantee that the covenant's covenfolk will get along with each other, or even obey the magi. It is the lot of magi to be outcasts. Sensible magi accept a certain level of difficulty from covenfolk as reality.

Nevertheless, it may be that covenfolk will feel the need to rebel, or just be fractious and contentious, as is the lot of many of the magi's lessers. Try keeping in mind that they are people and people need the basics for living. You might ask yourself why these covenfolk are so hard to handle. Is the covenant cold? Is there no food?

You could try to reason with the recalcitrant covenfolk. The magus/fear factor usually comes in handy here. Gaining the respect of the covenfolk also works wonders. This usually entails not treating them like firewood or using them for target practice.

In some cases you will be able to buy the affections and loyalty of your servants. And finally, if worse comes to worst you can send them on dangerous (and fatal) missions.



## The Offer

The magi of the Order are a haughty bunch. They have cause to be. They have created a society that has lasted for about 450 years. Their system of magic allows for simplified communication and research. It has hundreds of members with traditions that reach back a millenium if not further.

In addition, the Order has carefully created a fourth class in Mythic Europe, wedging itself between and among the medieval hierarchy. Where most fall into the Noble, Church, or Peasant classes, Magi belong to a separate class outside that system. While they are not 'officially' recognized as a separate class, the Order nevertheless is a force to be wary of. Peasants are careful in their presence, and may ask for their help in areas they know that the Church will not. Nobles are curious and may seek to harm them or ask their help depending on the situation. The Church despises magi and will usually act against them, though some members will seek to understand.

On many levels, the Order is only doing what is natural. The Order teaches a codified system of magic, one that allows everyone who know it to communicate about magic in a common way. This facilitates communication, fellowship, and a general sense of society. Those outside the Order are alien, different. Their various traditions make communication difficult and common ground is sparse. Their magic may be flawed (in the Order's opinion), or take up too many resources. The Order especially will not tolerate others mucking with mundane society, as that usually will come back on the Order.

The Order often doesn't bother offering the 'choice' to those who do not offer themselves up for scrutiny. There just isn't time to inspect every supposed charm maker or seller of love potions. Usually, only those who are powerful enough to be labeled a risk or those who are causing trouble are offered a 'chance to join the Order.'

If you have a question you would like the magi of Vespasian's Rest to answer, please submit it to 'ideas@gnawing.com' with the subject header of 'Council Passerum Missives' Missives will be selected on the scope and originality of the question. 



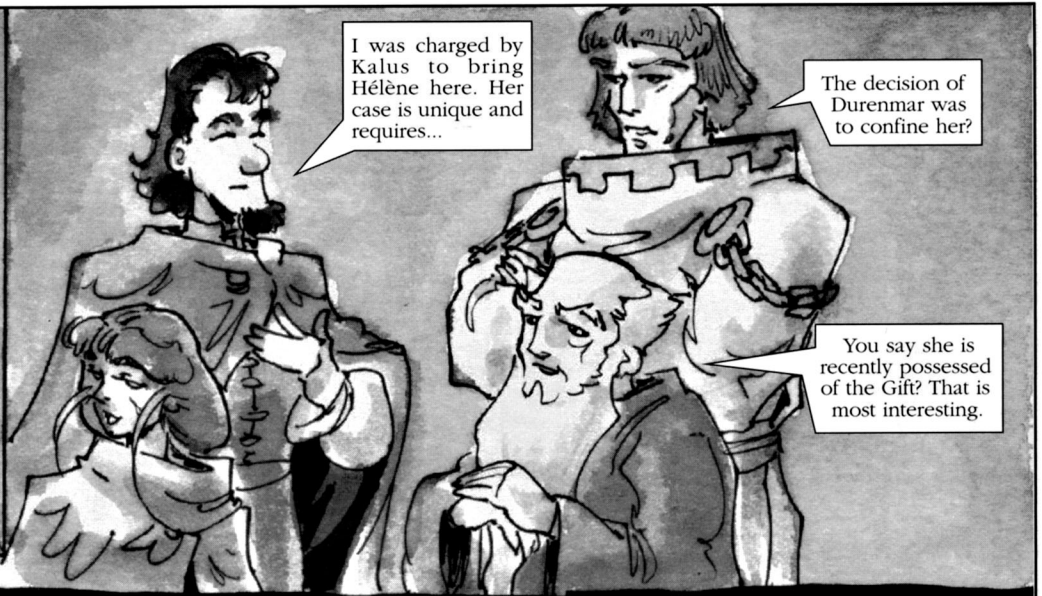
# TALES OF THE ORDER

A FAMILAR POINT OF VIEW

PART: 8

STORY BY: DAMELON KIMBROUGH

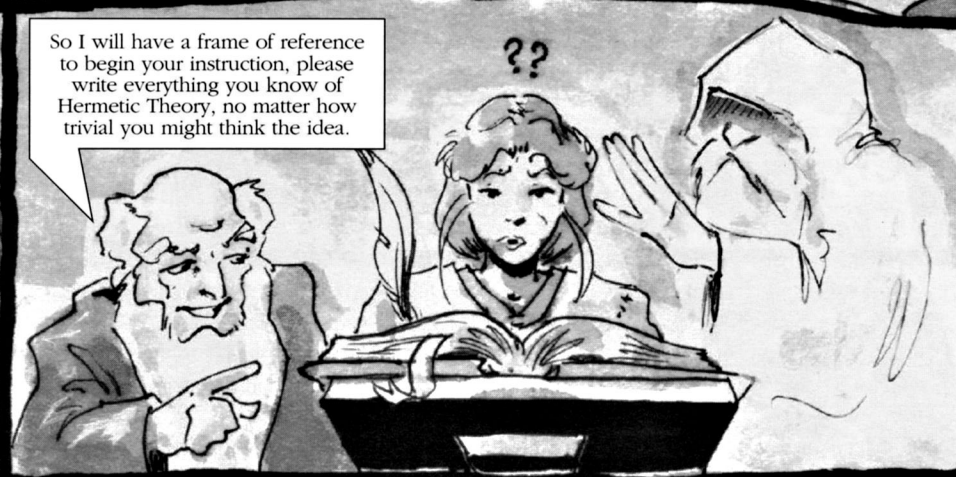
ART BY: DAN FLEENER







The issues are clear. As member of House Mercere and a member of the Order in good standing, the protections of the Oath and the Peripheral Code guarantee her right to come and go without fear of hinderance. Without a tribunal ruling to the contrary, the actions of Durenmar are clearly inappropriate. Do you concur?











# Epilogue

Salvete sodalis,

I am sure you have noticed by now that *Mythic Perspectives* has undergone another formatting change, but if you haven't let me explain why it is now the size it is or at least as I understand it. As you might know, *Mythic Perspectives* started as an A4 magazine copied on a Xerox Docutech. Then, because I feel driven to constantly improve the magazine, I gradually (first the cover, then the body of the magazine) started printing. During this process I increased the page count and also tried different cover stocks and paper. Some of the changes were good, some bad, but all were aimed at producing a better product. Now as this is all going on, I was dealing with different printers, mostly because of a general level of unabashed incompetence on their parts. The list of errors was extensive: lost files, wrong paper, wet and smeared ink, poor printing quality, etc. Now I have worked in and around the printing industry most of my adult life and most if not all of these problems could have been avoided if someone—anyone—had paid attention to what they were doing. At first I was not quick to jump ship when problems occurred, but after the same printer made over a dozen substantial errors during the first year's production, enough was enough. Since then there have been three more printers with each unable to meet their agreed upon quality or terms. Enter McNaughton & Gunn, the company that produces Ars Magica supplements for Atlas Games. I have the highest hopes that this will be the last move that MP makes regarding its production.

About the size change.... When I originally designed *Mythic Perspectives* I decided to use the European magazine standard. This was not done to create any level of difficulty in production, but it has turned out to be a constant problem. Until this issue, MP was produced on machines (photocopiers and presses) that fed one sheet and printed one side at a time. The machines were all capable of printing at European sizes without difficulty but because it was not "American" (as more than one of the printers remarked), "they needed to charge me extra". I am here to tell you this was nothing more than an excuse to price gouge by these businesses. The actual difference in surface area between one sheet and another is negligible in this type of printing. It is no extra work, it is not outside of specs, no reason! Now the new printer has an actual consideration (as I understand it) in that they print multiple pages and for everything to work out for the final product the A4 sizing throws everything off and would require more stock. So I changed the size to accommodate the best utilization of materials. The cost to maintain the original size was just enough that I would have been clinging to nothing but pride to not make the change.

In other news, I am working to expand the number of artists that participate in the illustration of the magazine. I am also going to refine certain elements (section headers, bullets, etc.) which are currently not really very appealing. Next issue will have the work of at least four, if not five illustrators. I am also looking at how to cram even more content into the 48 page format.

Now to drop some names and say some thank you's.... On the distributor front, Esdevium Games Ltd., a European game distributor based in the UK has begun carrying MP. If you are a European reader and your local store would like to carry *Mythic Perspectives*, please refer them to Esdevium. With the addition of Esdevium, the number of distributors has grown to five (Berkeley Top Line, Zocchi, Black Hawk, Centurion, and now Esdevium) and the possibility of at least two more seems to be very doable at this point. More and more stores are seeing the magazine. That can only be good. Storewise, I would like to thank Jessica Mosbaugh (Viking Hobby, Sacramento CA, USA), Tyler Stuart (Pandemonium Books and Games, Cambridge MA, USA), and John Morgan (Mind Games, Melbourne, Australia) the three of you took a chance on *Mythic Perspectives* before it was cool to do so. And while they are only recently carrying MP, the guys (Angus Abranson and Mike Berry) at Leisure Games in the UK have done right by me and I want to send a shout out their direction. Thanks guys! Now if the US subscriber base picks up some, I will be able to obtain better mailing rates and that will go along way to insuring MP a long and healthy existence.

Oh, and by the way. Welcome to year three!

Sincerely,



# Contest Information

## Fiction 2000

Do you enjoy writing fiction? If you do, why not enter the 3rd Mythic Perspectives fiction competition? Stories can address any concept that falls within the realm of Ars Magica and its Mythic Europe setting. The lives and times of kings, magi, knights, peasants, high and low, brought to life by your creative expression.

### Rules

1. Submissions must be in English, between 1000 and 5000 words, and either submitted as an .rtf file attachment to an email message; or an .rtf file sent on a 3.5" disk to the Mythic Perspectives mailbox; or a neatly typed or printed paper submission. All correspondances should be labeled **Fiction Competition 2000**. For standard mail allow sufficient time for submission deadline.

2. All stories must be set within the official Ars Magica milieu. In order to successfully write a story in the Ars Magica world, it is essential to be familiar with the main game book, and familiarity with the Order of Hermes or Houses of Hermes supplement might prove useful.

3. Judging will take place in two stages. First, the entries will be assessed for general readability and clarity. Then author's names will be removed and be passed on to a group of judges, who will decide the winner. The judges will be announced in the Winter 1999 issue of Mythic Perspectives. The winner will be notified after February 20th, 2000.

4. There will only be one cash prize.

5. All entries become the sole property of Gnawing Ideas and Mythic Perspectives.

6. The decisions of the editor and judges are final, and no correspondence will be entered into concerning the judging.

7. Only one entry is permitted per person.

8. Representatives or employees of Gnawing Ideas, Mythic Perspectives, Atlas Games, judges, or their families, are not eligible to enter.

### What you get if you win...

The winning entry and a selection of the rest will be published in a special fiction paperback if participation allows or the winner's entry will be published in a regular issue of Mythic Perspectives if it does not. All those published will receive a copy of the issue in which their story appears.

The winner (and only the winner) will receive a cash prize based upon the following: A base of \$100US plus \$10 per accepted entry, up to a maximum of \$300US. Thus, if ten people enter, the first prize will be \$200, and if twenty or more enter, the prize will be the full \$300.

### Entry Deadline

December 31, 1999



## What was on the Storyguide's mind...

Well, I have awarded a few prizes over the last couple of years as part of contests ran in the pages of *Mythic Perspectives* but received precious few entries for the effort. This contest wasn't any different. So for the time being all contests except for the yearly fiction writing contest (Fiction 2000) are suspended. In a few issues perhaps another attempt will be made. It seems that the rules/requirements of the contests have put off or confused prospective entrants and so before anymore contests of this nature get run I will devise a way to be clear so no misunderstandings will arise. The entries that were received for the 'What was on the Storyguide's mind...' contest will be judged and a winner will be announced in MP10. For those of you who did enter the various contests, thank you!



## Fiction 1999 Paperback

The Fiction 1999 paperback reader is still in a production holding pattern. While the materials and illustrations to finish the book are almost complete, I have been forced to postpone the project. I feel bad that it is three months past its projected release date but personal concerns have made it necessary and unavoidable. When it is completed (hopefully soon) all those who should receive it will. Please forgive my tardiness on this project.

And in case I have not said it before or often enough, congratulations to David Chart for his winning entry, 'Form and Substance'. It will be featured in the Fiction 1999 paperback along with other tales, illustrations and a special installment of 'Tales of the Order'. ■



# Ars Market

Personal ads in the Ars Market are free to subscribers as space allows. Ads can be to buy, to sell, or to trade, anything related to Ars Magica. Advertising space is also available for businesses with a product that will be of interest to storyguides and troupes and are related to Ars Magica and its specific gaming genre. Please contact the publisher for further details.

## Wanted

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We're trying to match our little town, Piacenza, Italy with a Northern-European town of medieval interest. This will mean that our town, and maybe the one you're living in, will exchange visits, tour medieval resorts, meet people, and generally have a good time.

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What we're looking for is for a town or city that makes profit of its historical past, and in which annual events concerning the Middle Ages are being held. So, if you are interested in making your city known, please contact me at '[cymbalus@equipiacenza.org](mailto:cymbalus@equipiacenza.org)' and we'll hammer out the details.

Vale!  
Massimiliano Bariola

I am looking for a copy of 'The Bats of Mercille' and 'Tales of the Dark Ages', if you have or know anyone who has these books and would be willing to part with them please contact Damelon Kimbrough at '[dk@gnawing.com](mailto:dk@gnawing.com)'. The copies only need to be in servicable condition as they will only for be used as reference material.

## Disclaimer, Et Cetera

**Mythic Perspectives and its publisher, Gnawing Ideas, reserve the right to refuse any material for any reason.**

**Got something related to Ars Magica to buy, to sell, or to trade? Contact us to place your own ad.**

## Mythic Perspectives - Back Issues

### Back Issues

**MP1** Cover by Eric Hotz. Articles include: The Mound of Dynfwll, The Court of Bright Summer by David Chart; The Tribunal, A Closer Look I by Alan Flesch; Loci Europæ Fabulosæ: What about Burgundy? by Jean Retz; plus more. A4, 28 pages, cover price **\$4.00 US**

**MP2** Cover by Glen Johnson. Articles include: The Mound of Dynfwll, The Court of Dark Summer by David Chart; The Tribunal, A Closer Look II by Alan Flesch; Loci Europæ Fabulosæ: Mont St. Michel by Stéphane Paquet and Eric Kouris; Impact of the Printing Press on the Order of Hermes by John Karakash; Tales of the Order, A Familiar Point of View I; plus more. A4, 36 pages, cover price **\$4.00 US**

**MP3** Cover by Dan Fleener. Articles include: The Mound of Dynfwll, The Court of Bright Winter by David Chart; The Tribunal, A Closer Look III by Alan Flesch; Loci Europæ Fabulosæ: The Eagle's Hunting Ground: Savoy and Piedmont by Benedict Chapman; Spring Seasoning; Tales of the Order, A Familiar Point of View II; plus more. A4, 40 pages, cover price **\$4.00 US**

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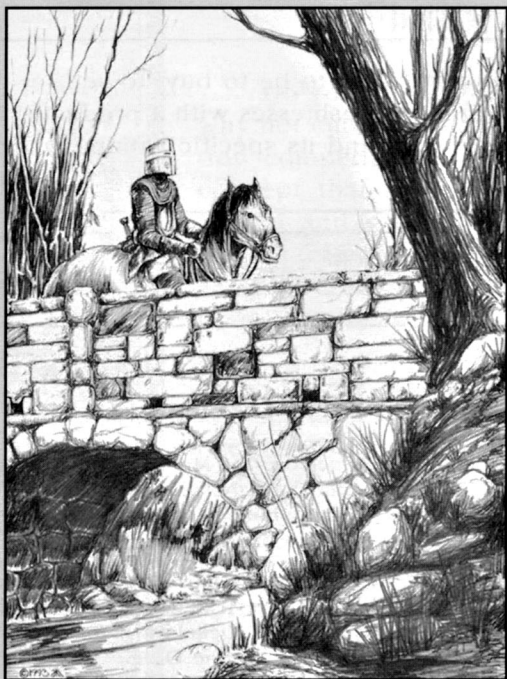
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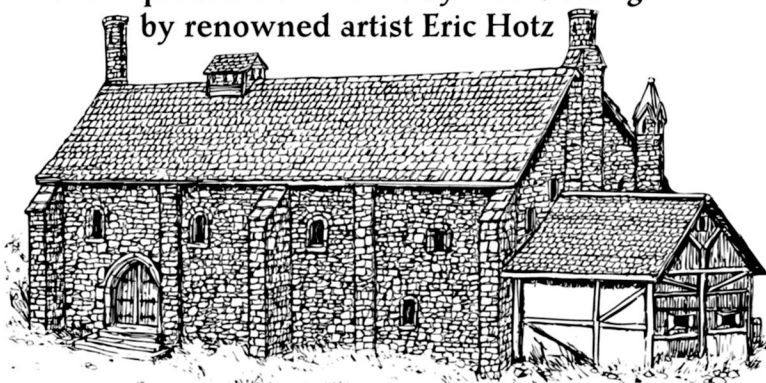
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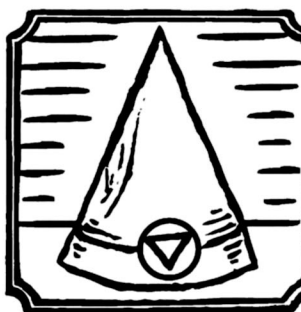
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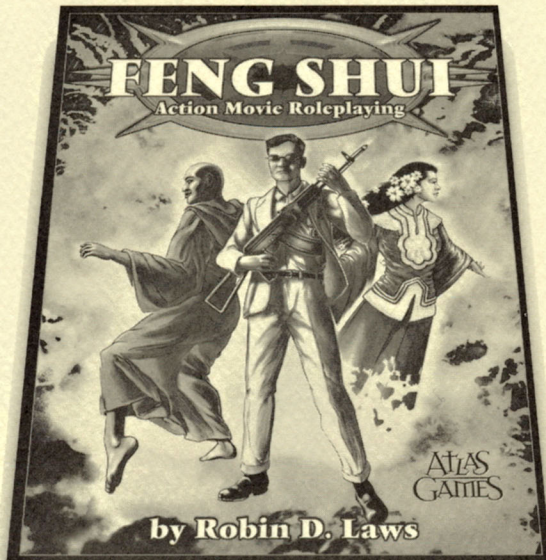
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ers and complete control of all of human history: you and your buddies.

*But you aren't just anyone.*

You're secret warriors — a group of butt-kicking, kung-fu fighting, spell-chucking, pistol-packing badasses. It's up to you to save the world, or die trying.

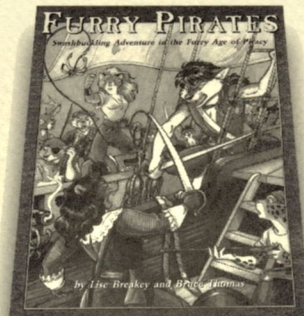
*Feng Shui* is the Hong Kong martial arts action-movie roleplaying game.

**AG4000 ♦ \$30.00**

## Furry Pirates

Sail the seas of high adventure with an untamed crew of rascalions and ne'er-do-wells. Seek fame and fortune with the wind in your fur and your mates at your side. Fight your way through the acrid smoke of flame-belching cannons to claim the glittering treasures of the Indies. Wealth, adventure, freedom, and romance await in the deep blue waters of *Furry Pirates*!

**AG3100 ♦ 22.95**



## Unknown Armies

A roleplaying game of transcendental horror and furious action — *Pulp Fiction* meets *Hellraiser*. In *Unknown Armies*, players take the roles of movers and shakers in the occult underground, fighting a battle for the ultimate prize: ascension to a higher plane and a hand in creating the next incarnation of reality. It's a pulp apocalypse, and the players have front-row seats for the steel-cage death match of all eternity.

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